



Clark Seif Clark Environmental Newsletter

www.csceng.com 800.807.1118

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Clark Seif Clark is pleased to bring environmental, health & safety and information about building sciences to thousands of professionals each month. We hope you enjoy the newsletter.

Sewage Contamination in Buildings can Expose People to Microbial Toxins

California residents are used to hearing about beach closures due to sewage spills and high bacteria counts in the water off of the state's famous beaches. Raw sewage can contain a host of potentially harmful substances, including: viruses, bacteria, protozoa, parasites, and fungi.

Just as health professionals take sewage in the beaches serious, people who have experienced a sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) in their home, school or place of business should also be aware of the risks associated with sewage in an indoor environment.

One area of concern during a SSO is the possible presence of endotoxins. Endotoxins are a type of bacterial toxin that is located in the cell wall component of the outer membrane of Gram-negative bacteria. Bacteria such as E. coli, Salmonella, and Helicobacter, which are often associated with sewage contamination events, are all Gram-negative types of bacteria.

A sanitary sewer overflow can be caused by a number of events such as a blocked sewer drain, broken pipes and even as a result of flooding. Building occupants and restoration and remediation contractors may be exposed to these harmful toxins. Not only can people be directly exposed to endotoxins by touching contaminated materials, but they can also breathe these toxins if they have become airborne during the drying or removal process.

Exposure to endotoxins can cause health concerns. It's important that when a SSO occurs that people take the necessary precautions to prevent exposure to endotoxins and other potential microbial hazards. Surface and air testing can quickly determine if these toxins or other harmful microorganisms are present.

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CSC recently sponsored an educational online video about endotoxins that can be seen at:



Endotoxins: What You Need to Know

To learn more about how CSC can help with IAQ or environmental issues please visit www.csceng.com, email csc@csceng.com or call (800) 807-1118.

Forest Fires Leave a Path of Destruction, Even Homes not Touched by Flames may have Smoke Residues

During the past several weeks the Waldo Canyon Fire in Colorado has caused several deaths, forced the evacuation of tens of thousands of people and burned over 300 people's homes and businesses. Dozens of other smaller fires across the Southwest have also left a path of destruction for a number of communities.

People in these affected communities have been allowed to return to their homes and businesses to find out if they survived the flames. Although many people will unfortunately find their properties in ruins, many others will be fortunate to find their properties untouched by the flames.

A number of these properties that survived the flames and don't initially appear to have visible signs of the fire may still have indoor environmental issues. Wildfire combustion by-products, including soot, char and ash, can easily infiltrate properties near these wildfires leaving behind smoke residues.

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Is It Safe?

Smoke residues can leave behind not only unpleasant odors, but can at times result in additional issues. Sometimes the visual proof of smoke infiltration is obvious, other times the evidence is quite subtle. Those facing the probable consequences of combustion by-product residue in their properties may require testing to determine the extent of its presence, to determine a reasonable scope of cleaning and to assist with the insurance claims process. CSC has the expertise to help in all of these areas.

CSC recently sponsored an educational video about indoor environmental concerns after a fire that can be seen at:



After the Fire - Indoor Environmental Concerns

To learn more about fire and smoke residue services or other indoor air quality and environmental services please visit www.csceng.com, email csc@csceng.com or call (800) 807-1118.

About Clark Seif Clark: CSC was established in 1989 to help clients in both the public and private sectors address environmental issues. CSC is a leading provider of these services with multiple offices along the western seaboard and southwest. The company believes in science-based protocols and has a strong background in engineering making them the preferred environmental consultants to healthcare facilities, architects, schools, builders, contractors, developers and real estate professionals.

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