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MOLD EXPERTS FIND EVIDENCE OF BIOTOXIN ILLNESS AND EXTREME LEVELS OF TOXIC MOLD

ST. BERNARD PARISH, LOUISIANA– More than one-half of 189 patients in five different groups including Firemen, Parish Employees, Health Workers, and Homeless Adults and Homeless Children are found to have highly elevated neurological and physical symptoms related to mold illness. In contrast, 22 crew members of the M/S Scotia Prince were normal in identical tests.

Experts recommend expanded medical evaluation/treatment and protective measures for residents and workers.

A “Mold Clinic” held in St Bernard Parish February 9-12, 2006 found that more than half the patients examined exhibited symptoms of biotoxin illness. Simultaneously, houses in the Parish were found to have extremely high levels of toxin-producing molds including

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Stachybotrys (also known as Black Mold).

“Our parish was devastated by Katrina with all but two buildings sustaining flood damage”, said Henry “Junior” Rodriguez, parish president. “We’re working hard to rebuild our community but we must have safe, temporary housing where our residents can escape constant exposure to widespread mold growth”.

The Mold Clinic was run by Dr. Ritchie C. Shoemaker, a nationally known physician, who has treated more than 5,000 biotoxin illness patients in over 30 years of medical practice and is the author of several books and scientific articles including *“Mold Warriors”*, published in 2005. (www.moldwarriors.com).

“There is no question about the potential for illness caused by biotoxins in this population: The data are overwhelming,” stated Dr. Shoemaker, in his report to the Saint Bernard Parish President, Parish Fire Chief, Parish Homeland Security Manager and the General Manager of the Scotia Prince.

“Our findings support the hypothesis that there are many persons with exposure to toxigenic organisms including mold, in St. Bernard Parish. These people should undergo complete medical evaluation and treatment,” added Dr. Shoemaker.

In a related environmental and landscape assessment in which he took samples and pictures of the housing and neighborhoods of the Parish, Dr. Richard L. Lipsey, a forensic toxicologist reported that “Most of the homes had extremely high levels (of mold), -- the highest I have ever seen -- in my 35 years of testing homes for toxic mold. ... the most common pathogenic mold appeared to be Stachybotrys, sometimes called the ‘Black Mold’, known to be 10 times more toxic than the most pathogenic but more common molds, Penicillium and Aspergillus.”... “Stachybotrys produces tricothocenes which, in highly purified forms have been developed by the U.S. Army and never used, having since

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been destroyed.” writes Dr. Lipsey in his report.

Dr. Lipsey continues: “Many of the homes must be bulldozed and burned since they cannot be salvaged, and none of the Parish residents living on the Scotia Prince (who have remained less affected by the toxins) should return to their neighborhoods without proper protective equipment.”

Results of the mold clinic and sampling from the homes in St. Bernard Parish follow (Chart below) . The control group for the study consisted of crew aboard the M/S Scotia Prince which has been docked in the Parish since mid September under contract to FEMA.

SUMMARY OF MOLD CLINIC PATIENTS’ SYMPTOMS INDICATING BIOTOXIN ILLNESS

Location	N=	# Positive	% Positive
Firemen	31	14	45.2%
Parish Employees	16	11	68.6%
Health Workers	6	2	33.3%
Homeless Adults	126	71	56.3%
Homeless Children	10	5	50.0%
Total SB Parish	189	103	54.5%
Controls (ship)	23	1	4.3% *
Historical Controls	239	0	0

* note: this value is due to Ciguatera toxicity in a crewman who had eaten fish in the Carribbean previous to the test. (Please see full report).

None of the crew showed signs of biotoxin illness and Dr. Shoemaker noted in his report that “the only ‘residential’ location in St. Bernard Parish that did not have its ‘residents’ (the Crew) identified with biotoxin-associated illness is the M/S Scotia Prince”.

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Dr. Shoemaker continued “Trailers installed next to contaminated buildings, used by persons with unprotected indoor exposure to those contaminated structures cannot be considered to be a shelter strategy that provides protection from toxigenic elements, including fungi, resident in the contaminated structures”.

The Parish continues to struggle with accommodating residents in the face of a severe shortage of trailers and the imminent departure of the M/S Scotia Prince at the conclusion of FE MA's 6 month charter of the vessel.

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