

What happened to Iowa Nice?

My **awful moldy** adventures with the University of Iowa and the Iowa Board of Regents.

So what's a nice guy like me doing suing a nice state like Iowa?

As one who does his best to avoid courts and litigation, my usual response would be walk away from disagreeable sorts and thank my lucky stars that I don't have to be them. But sometimes wrong things are, well, just plain wrong and more people stand to be hurt if someone doesn't stand up and do the right thing. And that's largely what this case is about: an amazing amount of responsible people who have responded indifferently to a serious problem that endangered my health, who have shown themselves willing to expose others to danger, and who are fighting to protect their ability to endanger others and preserve their legal rights to lie to cover their fannies.

In a nutshell...

I rented a house from the University of Iowa. Due to miserable maintenance, water started flowing through the basement. My many complaints about mold were blithely ignored. I grew sicker and sicker, not knowing the danger mold poses for some people, until I was diagnosed with a mold allergy. After I left the house, the University of Iowa moved five students in without testing or fixing the mold. In the subsequent months, largely because of my complaints, the UI had the house tested by a reliable environmental engineer. Since then they have quietly **spent over \$30,000 fixing** the mold problems.

At the same time I complained to dozens of people, from the UI business office, the UI and State Ombudspersons, my elected representatives, the Board of Regents, and the Governor. While some expressed surprise and disgust, many of the responsible parties continued to lie about the case even when contradictory information was available to them.

It's not like I'm asking for the moon. I'd like my stuff cleaned up. I'd like to be refunded my current and future out-of-pocket expenses. I'd like to see the State pledge to be more responsive to mold issues in their buildings.

Oh, yeah... and I'd like an apology.

Heck, after the Governor had to abandon his mansion this summer because mold was making his wife sick, I even offered to use my claim money to go in halves on a blue ribbon panel to establish state standards for mold. (He did not respond...)

This whole case is about Iowans being remarkably un-Iowan.

LINKS:

[Environmental engineer's report](#) Dec.2008. After the UI had already spent \$6,000 to remediate, molds still "likely pose a health hazard" to the students living in the home.

[Governor flees from mold in his mansion](#) The Des Moines Register covers Iowa's skeddaddling First Family.

[I make Gov. Branstad an offer to team up to clean up.](#) Unrequited citizenship.

["Is Our Regents Learning?"](#) A gratuitous lesson for our indifferent club.

[A little story about what it feels like to take on the Board of Regents](#) Hey! We're a "City of Literature", right?

[The State Attorney General claims Iowa employees have a license to lie.](#) Seriously.

[Is There an Adult in the Room?](#) After years of trying to solve things collegially, I go public as the statute of limitations runs out.

[Lies from Robert Donley, the Executive Director of the Iowa Board of Regents](#) A+ for creativity. F for style.

[Letter from Iowa's Department of Justice denying my claim.](#) "We don't care. We don't have to."

[Way too many details about my experience at 219 Melrose Court](#) (including the gruesome photos...)

[Home Page](#)

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