



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wilmington Housing Authority Responds To *News Journal* Inquiry On Mold Complaint in Southbridge

Wilmington Housing Authority can confirm that one of its residents in the Southbridge Neighborhood has informed the WHA that she has experienced upper respiratory issues that she attributes to mold sensitivity.

(Wilmington, DE – November 14, 2019) – The Wilmington Housing Authority today responded to a *News Journal* inquiry on a mold complaint in the neighborhood of Southbridge. The WHA can confirm that they have been in contact with one of the residents, who has informed the agency of her upper respiratory issues believed to be attributed to mold sensitivity. The WHA takes all resident work order complaints seriously and holds the health and safety of its residents in high regard.

Upon receipt of the complaint, The WHA took immediate action to begin investigating the resident's mold concern. They retained Harvard Environmental, Inc. to evaluate the unit, document conditions and perform mold air sampling. Their subsequent Mold Assessment Report indicated that the Mold Counts were lower than the ambient counts outside of the home. Out of an abundance of caution, WHA cleaned her unit and duct work, installed a dehumidifier and re-tested the unit to confirm that there was not increased or unusual mold concentrations in the home. The WHA took further steps to accommodate their resident and address her concerns by offering her six (6) different units in various Wilmington neighborhoods. WHA showed the resident a seventh unit today, Thursday, November 14th, which the family has accepted. WHA has assured the resident that the unit will be tested for mold on Monday, November 18th.

"The health and safety of our residents is our top priority," said WHA Executive Director John Hill. "We are, and will always remain, committed to providing safe, decent and affordable housing to the low-income families of our city. It is a responsibility we take seriously, and these types of complaints are treated quickly and with the utmost respect for our residents and their health."

In response to the singular mold complaint, the WHA has completed an additional Mold Assessment and Audit of all 180 units in the Southbridge Community. The primary conclusion of that Report is that the majority of units do not present increased Mold Counts. However, a number of the units presented slightly elevated counts, and 15 units measured counts that require further investigation and targeted response, to be completed in the next week. Molds are naturally occurring organisms that exist throughout our community. The elevated counts can be attributed to a variety of non-systemic sources. WHA, through its consultants and staff, are addressing these individualized circumstances.

WHA will circulate a mold prevention brochure to all of its residents within the next two weeks, outlining steps that they can take to minimize mold growth and exposure, and to contact management if they suspect this naturally occurring condition. If any Wilmington House Authority residents are concerned about mold in their units, the WHA urges them to report it immediately to their community Property Manager.

About The Wilmington Housing Authority:

As the largest direct provider of affordable housing opportunities in the State of Delaware, we're committed to developing, providing, and managing safe, and affordable housing for low-income families in the city of Wilmington. Funded primarily by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, our mission is to provide well-maintained, decent, and safe housing in a professional, efficient, and fiscally responsible manner.

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