

Assembly Bill No. 284

CHAPTER 550

An act to add Chapter 19 (commencing with Section 26200) to Division 20 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to public health.

[Approved by Governor October 5, 2001. Filed with Secretary of State October 7, 2001.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 284, Jackson. Public health: fungal contamination in indoor environments.

Existing law provides that the State Department of Health Services is vested with the duties, powers, purposes, responsibilities, and the jurisdiction of the department as they relate to public health. The department has various duties to ensure that the most appropriate methods are being used to protect the public health.

This bill would require the California Research Bureau, which is part of the California State Library, in consultation with the State Department of Health Services, to perform a study of, and publish findings on, fungal contamination in indoor environments, and to organize meetings of a review panel to assist in the preparation of appropriate content for the study. This bill would require the California Research Bureau to submit, no later than January 1, 2003, the findings of the study to both the Legislature and the Director of Health Services.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) The problem of indoor air pollution has generated concern among the scientific and public health communities around the world.

(b) Bioaerosols, airborne particles emitted by fungi and bacteria, are among the more than 1,500 indoor air pollutants that pose potential hazards to public health.

(c) The occurrence of adverse health effects on humans from fungi can range from relatively minor symptoms, such as headache, sore throat, and fatigue, to more serious effects.

(d) While the inhalation of fungal spores is believed to contribute to allergic reactions, infections, and other adverse health effects, there is also considerable debate about practical options for the prevention and control of fungi in indoor environments.



(e) Because fungi are ubiquitous in indoor environments, the control of fungi poses a special difficulty for homeowners, building owners, tenants, and public health officers.

(f) Therefore, the State of California needs to promote a more thorough understanding of the options for addressing fungal contamination within the context of a wide array of indoor air pollutants that are frequently inadequately understood.

(g) By convening a review panel of experts to examine potential hazards, their prevention, and their remediation, the state can provide guidance to a growing public concern about options for avoiding and remediating problems posed by fungal contamination.

SEC. 2. Chapter 19 (commencing with Section 26200) is added to Division 20 of the Health and Safety Code, to read:

CHAPTER 19. FUNGAL CONTAMINATION REVIEW PANEL AND
RESEARCH PROGRAM

26200. (a) The California Research Bureau, in consultation with the State Department of Health Services, shall perform a study and publish findings on fungal contamination affecting indoor environments, in accordance with this chapter.

(b) The California Research Bureau shall organize meetings of a review panel to assist in the preparation of appropriate content for the study.

(c) The California Research Bureau shall appoint to the review panel a diverse group of professionals including, but not limited to, representatives of the following:

- (1) Health officers.
- (2) Environmental health directors.
- (3) Experts on the health effects of fungi.
- (4) Medical experts.
- (5) Mold testing experts.
- (6) Industrial hygienists.
- (7) Engineers.

26201. The review panel shall examine the following areas relating to fungal contamination in indoor environments:

- (a) Medical and public health.
- (b) Evaluation and monitoring.
- (c) Remediation and prevention.
- (d) Educational materials.
- (e) Hazard communication.
- (f) Any other area identified by the review panel.



26202. The panel shall review and, to the extent resources and expertise permit, make findings on all of the following:

(a) The health effects of exposure to fungi, based on a review of the literature addressing immunology, infectious disease, and medical evaluation.

(b) The practices for assessing fungal contamination, including the use of visual inspection, surface sampling, air monitoring, and the proper analysis of environmental samples.

(c) To the extent feasible, the appropriateness of commercially available methods for identifying fungal contamination of building components including, but not limited to, walls, ventilation systems, and support beams.

(d) The options for preventing and remediating fungal contamination in indoor environments. The findings are intended as a practical guide regarding options for building managers, homeowners, and members of the general public who may have concerns about fungal contamination in living and working environments.

(e) Recommendations on hazard communication for distinct subpopulations, including workers employed in high-risk occupations.

(f) The development of a recommended reading list related to molds, their health effects, their impacts on indoor air quality, and related topics for local government officials, including environmental health officers.

(g) Any additional topical areas deemed appropriate by the review panel.

26203. (a) By January 1, 2003, the California Research Bureau shall submit to the Legislature and the Director of Health Services the published findings of the study.

(b) (1) The findings may provide relevant information to the State Department of Health Services for the purpose of establishing standards and guidelines on fungal contamination affecting indoor environments pursuant to Chapter 18 (commencing with Section 26100).

(2) This subdivision may serve as a source of information for department programs relating to fungal contamination, including those provisions that become operative if Senate Bill 732 is enacted and adds Chapter 18 (commencing with Section 26100).

26204. Of the funds identified in provision (2) of Item 6120-011-0001 of the Budget Act of 2001, twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) shall be made available to be used for contracts for outside researchers pursuant to this chapter.

