

# ICBC shuts office over mould scare

By Jason Proctor  
Staff Reporter

A health scare among anxious ICBC workers caused the insurance giant to hastily close one of its Surrey offices last week after the discovery of mould in a set of air conditioning fans.

A spokesman for the Insurance Corp. of B.C. said Friday that management acted out of concern for workers — reacting to levels of contamination that are in fact lower inside the affected building than outside. But Hal Wake said no evidence exists to link the mould to two employees suffering brain tumours.

"We have no information to suggest that there is any link between the illnesses of our employees and the presence of mould," said Wake. "Normally, the health effects from mould are things like nasal stuffiness, eye infections and wheezing."

ICBC was first alerted to possible problems with the office at 15326-103A Ave. last November by a group of employees with concerns about their health. The site is an office building that the insurance corporation leases for members of its special investigations unit.

At some point in recent months, two

employees contracted brain tumours, leading staff to worry that some connection might be made between the illnesses and the building.

Previous inspections revealed no problems, but a report handed the company on Thursday by Theodore Sterling Associates revealed a problem.

"It found that there was a presence of mould in air conditioning units on the roof," said Wake. "The level of the air samples concluded that mould spore concentrations indoors were lower than the corresponding concentrations outdoors."

The inspection found 82 spores per cubic metre inside as opposed to 1,104 spores per cubic metre outside the premises. No standards exist that would require an employer to shut down at certain levels, but Wake said ICBC decided not to take any chances.

A Workers Compensation Board spokesperson said the WCB is not involved in the case, but that ICBC had taken all the steps it would normally suggest. Wake said employees were sent home and told to report to different ICBC locations on Monday.

The company has no plans to return to the Surrey building.

## Lotto

The winning numbers in Saturday's Lotto 6/49 draw were 7, 14, 20, 30, 35 and 36. The bonus number was 10.

The BC/49 lottery winning numbers Saturday were 7, 10, 13, 16, 27 and 47. The bonus number was 17.

The four Extra winning numbers for B.C. were 30, 31, 55 and 81.

The Lotto Super 7 numbers Friday were 4, 10, 12, 24, 27, 31 and 34. The bonus number was 29.

The Extra numbers were 9, 40, 69 and 84.

The winning number drawn in The Daily 3 on Saturday night was 508.

The winning number drawn in The Daily 3 on Friday night was 017.

All these numbers are unofficial.