

COOK COUNTY HEALTHCARE FACILITY

A health care facility in Cook County, IL. suffered a fire in its laundry room as a result of work being done on the roof. Aside from the vast fire and smoke damage, the inspection revealed an unexpected and significant environmental issue which posed huge safety and legal risks to the patients, property's ownership and management.



Results

The facility was able to operate with no interruption or relocation of residents and minimal disruption to staff, while complying with IICRC S-520 guidelines & EPA safety recommendations...and to the complete satisfaction of the facility's management and ownership.



BACKGROUND

The fire which began on the roof infiltrated the laundry room via a duct opening. Since the nature of this 300+ bed property involved the residential care of people susceptible to additional health risks caused by mold exposure, an immediate and comprehensive plan of remediation was necessary including one that limited the legal liability of the property's ownership and management.

The site sustained disaster, with structural materials charred, sooty or displaced entirely. The disengagement of the materials is what revealed the presence of mold, as well as repeated contact with water.

Initial response called for air scrubbers and temporary power and lighting. Methodical cleaning protocol written by a certified industrial hygienist

CHALLENGES

1. In a property designed for residential health care, regardless of occupancy, loss of use or resident relocation would be extremely unfortunate. Revenue loss for the time span of the remediation could adversely affect operations.
2. The inconvenience and disruption to residents and staff poses potentially damaging challenges. So the project must be fast, thorough, and minimally disruptive to ongoing operation.
3. Discretion was imperative. Mold presence can be the subject of negative PR with residents and staff alike.