

MEMBER UPDATE



MELCOR CENTRE, LETHBRIDGE

LOCAL 058 CHAPTER 016

LOCAL 041 CHAPTER 001

LOCAL 057 CHAPTER 009

LOCAL 095 CHAPTER 008

AHS members frustrated by continuing problems at Melcor Centre, Lethbridge

Please take part in online meeting at 5:30 p.m. on July 12 to discuss next steps

The Alberta Health Services (AHS) facility in Lethbridge's controversial Melcor Centre has experienced at least four disruptive flooding incidents or leaks this year.

The latest incident last week led to the collapse of ceiling tiles in a work area in the audiology department. This is part of a pattern of continuing problems in the AHS part of Melcor Centre dating back several years.

Similar problems have plagued other tenants at Melcor Tower, including fellow AUPE members employed by the Government of Alberta (GOA).

Why is this a problem?

The frequent flooding and leaks are not only disruptive to workers and Albertans using the facility, but they are also a health hazard. So far, ceiling tiles have collapsed on work areas when there has been no one in the affected rooms, but we might not be so lucky next time. We don't want to see workers or those visiting the building be seriously injured.

Frequent flooding and leaks can also create mould, which is a threat to health. Members have been complaining about suffering from headaches while working in Melcor Centre.

While there have been air-quality tests that showed the levels of mould had not reached the official level considered to be a health hazard, there are no provincial standards that measure long-term exposure.

Meanwhile, workers have reported that there are black widow spiders, silver fish and mice in the building. Some have been trapped in elevators and others say that the stairs are unsafe.

Members feel like they are trapped in a toxic building and are frustrated.

What is AHS doing about this?

Not enough.

AHS says it's comfortable letting the landlord continue to repair problems as they arise. It says the landlord has appointed a new company to address issues.

This laid-back approach stands in contrast to the GOA. After pressure from AUPE members, the GOA has said it will not renew its lease at the Melcor Centre when it expires in 2025. While waiting for two years to move isn't doing enough to protect people in the building now, the GOA decision does at least provide a little light at the end of the tunnel.

What should AHS be doing?

AHS should recognize that the Melcor Centre is unsuitable for AHS's needs.

Accepting that these problems will continue and being content to try to address them as they happen isn't enough. It's clear that after many years of issues affecting many tenants, the landlord is either unable or unwilling to fix the building.

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It's time to move on.

At the very least, it's time for AHS to do what the GOA has done and announce that it will not renew its lease when it expires. Like the GOA, this will be in 2025.

It's time for AHS to begin the search for new premises that do not pose a danger to workers or visitors. If a new site can be found before the lease expires, then AHS should move immediately, rather than waiting until the lease expires.

What can members do?

Members can put pressure on AHS to leave Melcor Centre.

GOA members filed Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) complaints with Occupational Health and Safety, Alberta Labour.

You can do that online here or by phone at **1-866-415-8690**. AUPE OH&S representative **Diana Griffith** can help you fill out and submit those forms and answer any questions you may have about the process. She can be reached at d.griffith@aupe.org.

You may also want to consider filing a grievance. Your Membership Services Officer (MSO) can help with that. You can contact your MSO by phone at **1-800-232-7284** or by clicking here.

Please attend a meeting of members to discuss what you want to do next

We need to know what you, the members, are thinking and what you want.

We will be holding an online meeting to discuss the situation at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, July 12. Your actions can help create pressure to find a permanent solution to the problems at the Melcor Centre.

Join on your computer or mobile app

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or join by entering a meeting ID

Meeting ID: 263 100 811 771

Passcode: 2aPXFw

Or call in (audio only)

+1 587-404-4140,,466310541# Canada, Edmonton

Phone Conference ID: 466 310 541#