

# Foster® Helps Three Mill Road Go The Extra Mile

**T**hree Mill Road has been referred to as "Delaware's most radical office building". On the bank of the Brandywine River near Wilmington, DE, this award winning 60,000 square foot, five story office structure was built in 1989 and occupied almost as soon as its doors opened. Often referred to as the "Treehouse" because of its cantilever design, Three Mill Road looks like an inverted pyramid. The architect for Rokeby Realty Company, the owner and management company overseeing this structure, used this design to maximize development of a "narrow, virtually unbuildable lot." In the fall of 1995, reports reached Rokeby that several individuals working in the building were experiencing discomfort which they felt was connected with their work space. Though the total number of tenants involved equated to less than 2% of the building's total census, Rokeby took immediate action and secured the services of a notable environmental consultant.

The building audit was extremely complete. Air samples were taken throughout the structure and compared to ambient conditions; extractions were taken from the carpeting and other fabric materials; and, the HVAC system underwent a complete visual, analytical, and mechanical evaluation.

Air samples did not indicate a microbial problem. Interior characterizations were consistent throughout the building and in line with those derived from ambient covers. Though within acceptable microbial levels, airborne fiber counts were slightly elevated.

Extractions from the carpeting and woven materials paralleled that of the air samples. Aside from the normal contaminants you would expect to find, the speciation and concentrations derived from the extractions were as expected.

The analytical and visual audit, in an area that encompasses

60,000 square feet of office space, discovered one isolated area of bacterial growth on the top side of a lay-in ceiling panel. With the probable causes below eliminated, the audit intensified above the ceiling.

The plenum space above the lay-in ceiling serves as the HVAC return air source. With the possibility of migration into the system, the units and all related ductwork were thoroughly evaluated and found not to be microbially contaminated. However, the rooftop outdoor air intake was not operating to maximum efficiency.

With the results of the audit in hand, Rokeby could decide upon and initiate a course of action. Once determined, the first order of business was to inform each tenant the findings of the environmental consultant. In a meeting of representatives, Rokeby passed on that information and laid out intent. The impacted ceiling tiles were already discarded; every remaining ceiling tile was to be removed, cleaned, disinfected, and replaced; the rooftop outdoor air intake system was to be replaced and redesigned with higher efficiency filtration; and, the interior of the existing ductboard system was to be coated. Not with just any coating, but with Foster Fungicidal Protective coating, 40-20.

Foster 40-20 would not only minimize fiber release but help to guard against future colonization of fungi and odor-causing bacteria. "We felt it our obligation to go the extra mile. We secured what we believed to be the best available consultant, contractor, and coating system. Our tenants are very important to us, they deserve the best.

If your organization is looking for the best, highest quality, dependable materials specifically designed to address the needs of this market, contact your local Foster representative or call 800-999-2845.



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