



Clark Seif Clark Environmental Newsletter

www.csceng.com 800.807.1118

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Every day, Clark Seif Clark professionals are deployed across the nation helping both large and small customers resolve health & safety, industrial hygiene, environmental and indoor air quality issues.

At a moment's notice, Clark Seif Clark can send their experts anywhere they are needed. No matter if it's in response to a hurricane, wildfire, flood, tornado, or other natural disaster, Clark Seif Clark is ready to help and can respond in no time at all.

Hear Clark Seif Clark's very own Derrick Denis discuss common indoor air quality issues facing homeowners on [Independent Talk KFNX 1100](#)

Hurricanes Harvey and Irma Deliver Catastrophic Property Damage and Indoor Environmental Quality Issues

In the past several weeks, Hurricanes Harvey and Irma have brought powerful winds and an unprecedented amount of rain that has resulted in devastating floods across large areas of Texas and Florida. In addition to tragic deaths as a result of the historic storm, countless homes, schools and businesses have been heavily damaged or even destroyed in some cases.

One estimate from an insurance group has put the cost of the property damage caused by Hurricane Harvey at levels similar to those caused by 2005's Hurricane Katrina. In fact, the head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has said they are planning for a years-long recovery and rebuilding effort. Damage estimates for Hurricane Irma are also in the tens of billions of dollars.

"When people return back to their homes and businesses to begin the process of damage assessment, cleanup, demolition, repair and rebuilding, it's important that they recognize that many of these

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damaged structures likely pose health and safety concerns for workers and any building occupants," said Franco Seif, President at Clark Seif Clark (CSC). "Having worked many past hurricanes, including Katrina and Sandy, we know firsthand that most water damaged structures had more than just water enter them. Flood waters can contain a host of microbial and chemical contaminants. Even clean rain water, known as Category 1 water damage, that enters a building can begin to allow mold growth in as short as 48 hours. Flood waters could be either Gray Water or Black Water, known as Category 2 and 3, depending on what they have been in contact with. A host of viruses, parasites, bacteria, fungi, pesticides, fuels and other contaminants could be present. Legionella bacteria can also affect unoccupied, damaged buildings when stagnant water in pipes become contaminated, causing potential respiratory harm to building occupants upon their return. Only proper cleanup and restoration, followed up by a thorough post restoration verification assessment can insure an impacted property is habitable."

Another health and safety concern for residents relates to asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paints. Many properties in the affected areas were built before the use of lead-based paints and building materials that contained asbestos were banned. Cleanup activities and demolition can easily aerosolize these materials creating a health hazard to anyone nearby. Also, there are federal, state and city laws and regulations that one must abide by when handling asbestos or lead.

Clark Seif Clark has environmental teams ready to help Hurricane Harvey and Irma victims. To learn more about this or other indoor environmental, industrial hygiene, health and safety issues during the cleanup and rebuilding process, please visit www.csceng.com, email csc@csceng.com or call (800) 807-1118.

Preventing Injuries, Fatalities and Costly Noncompliance Penalties with Effective Fall Protection Programs

Just last month, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) announced proposed penalties of over \$1.5 million for a Florida roofing contractor for repeatedly failing to protect its workers from the risks of dangerous falls and other hazards.

Unfortunately, these types of worker injuries and fatalities are all too common. In fact, OSHA reports that falls are among the most common causes of serious work related injuries and deaths.

Employers are required by law to set up the work place to prevent employees from falling off of overhead platforms, elevated work

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Is It Safe?

stations or into holes in the floor and walls. OSHA mandates that fall protection be provided at elevations of four feet in general industry workplaces, five feet in shipyards, six feet in the construction industry and eight feet in longshoring operations. In addition, OSHA requires that fall protection be provided when working over dangerous equipment and machinery, regardless of the fall distance.

"Fall protection is the backup system planned for a worker who could lose his or her balance at height, in order to control or eliminate injury potential," said Zahid Iqbal, MPH, CIH and Technical Director at Clark Seif Clark. " Generally, fall protection can be provided through the use of guardrail systems, safety net systems or personal fall arrest systems. OSHA refers to these systems as conventional fall protection. Other systems and methods of fall protection may be used when performing certain activities."

Helping companies and institutions develop, manage and monitor fall protection programs are the industrial hygiene experts at Clark Seif Clark. Staffed with Certified Industrial Hygienists (CIHs) and other occupational and environmental professionals, their teams are available nationwide. Their fall protection services and hazard communication training not only help to safeguard the health and safety of workers, they are also instrumental for complying with existing regulations to avoid costly noncompliance fines in many work environments.

To learn more about this or other industrial hygiene, occupational, environmental, indoor air quality, health and safety services, please visit www.csceng.com , email csc@csceng.com or call (800) 807-1118.

About Clark Seif Clark: CSC was established in 1989 to help clients in both the public and private sectors address environmental issues. CSC is a leading provider of these services with multiple offices along the western seaboard and southwest. The company believes in science-based protocols and has a strong background in engineering making them the preferred environmental consultants to healthcare facilities, architects, schools, builders, contractors, developers and real estate professionals.