



# U.S. Department of Labor O.S.H.A called for alleged workplace hazards at RPI

*Jill Konopka July 25th 2019, 7:19 pm*

13 Investigates is looking into allegations of workplace hazards at RPI now under investigation by the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration. NewsChannel 13 was contacted by a viewer who said their loved one and other RPI employees at the college's Center for Career and Professional Development have been dealing with unsanitary working conditions for months.

The viewer asked NewsChannel 13 to investigate, writing 'RPI has been presenting itself as a prestigious institute to the community for years, but can't seem to maintain a healthy environment for visiting employers, as well as its own students and employees.'

NewsChannel 13 got in contact with past and present employees who shared photos and videos of cockroaches, mold, and sewage back-ups in bathrooms inside RPI's main floor and upstairs at the Darrin Communications Center.

Cockroaches could be seen crawling on floors, doors, even keyboards. The images documented over the past year and shared with NewsChannel 13. Some students near campus Thursday afternoon were shocked.

John Glendye is a student who hasn't had any issues in his dorm but hearing about the current conditions at the DCC he responded, 'It's kind of ridiculous.'

Videos shared with NewsChannel 13 captured sewage, feces and urine on the bathroom floor at the DCC.

Student John Glendye added, 'I mean base pay is over \$70,000 to go to the school per year so you'd think they'd have enough to clean.'

Jiayao Zhu is also a student at RPI, 'I would feel ashamed,' he told NewsChannel 13.

Other pictures were shared of critters and mold snapped and saved over the past year. The ongoing alleged problems well documented over the years on Facebook and Reddit too, as recently as four months ago.

Zhu added, 'I think the school should fix the problem as soon as possible.'

On July 15, 2019 OSHA was contacted about RPI's alleged workplace hazards.

Glendye stated, 'I mean it's absolutely gross.'

School officials posted a letter from OSHA identifying the cockroach infestation and mold allegations at the DCC. OSHA also calling for immediate action, 'Our goal to assure hazards are promptly identified and eliminated.

RPI had until Monday, July 22, 2019 to respond.

A Department of Labor spokesman says the school's response was 'satisfactory' and they were closing the case. However, 13 Investigates obtained an internal email from RPI canceling a staff meeting Thursday afternoon. The center's new director writing they're 'still in the process of addressing the OSHA complaint...We need these issues or at least a response to these issues ASAP. As soon as they have their responses and action plans finalized we will reschedule.'

Hours later, the bathroom in question was closed for cleaning.

Student John Glendye told NewsChannel 13, 'I wouldn't tolerate living in those conditions.' Reporter Jill Konopka stated, 'But OSHA said they're looking into it and the school responded and they're closing the complaint?' Glendye added, 'I mean, I don't think that's acceptable.'

13 Investigates brought that new video and email to OSHA's Albany office and are waiting to hear back. An RPI spokesman declined an on camera interview, but said the school is being responsive to OSHA as this allegation is looked into and that they had nothing further to add.

**RPI- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute**