

Levitt and Sons is ruining my life

(taken from [Http://www.levittandsonshome.com](http://www.levittandsonshome.com))



Try to imagine the horror and disappointment I felt just after successfully completing my first round of Chemotherapy, when a nurse stepped into my room at MD Anderson Cancer Center and asked, "I bet you are glad to be going home"!

Yet, just one month after being diagnosed with Acute Myelogenous Leukemia, I was not able to return home. I explained to the nurse that my infectious disease specialist had given me strict orders NOT to return to my house. At a critical time when I needed the support and love of my wife and two children, I was ordered to make other living arrangements. I wouldn't be able to wake up to the sound of my children laughing. I wouldn't find comfort in my own bed next to my

beautiful wife. I was struggling with my life threatening illness and now needed to find a new place to live.

These orders were issued due to an ongoing problem with mold growth in our newly constructed home. The mold was caused by continuing water intrusion and the inability, incompetence and unprofessional work by Levitt and Sons to remedy the problem. Yes, our builder attempted to repair the damage, time and time again. They replaced walls, flooring and carpet. They continued to replace and band-aid the damages, but NEVER tried to find the source of the water intrusion. Why are we after two years STILL continuing to have water intrusion in our home? Why after two years has a structural engineer not been obtained to complete this task? Why after two years are we still living with rooms without walls or floors?

It all started, same as many other Floridians, with the hurricanes of 2004. We felt fortunate, we never lost power, our roof was in tact, and our family was safe. We did however have water coming into the east side of our home; through walls, windows and through a huge gap in our front door. We contacted Levitt and Sons about this water intrusion. After several weeks, they sent their workers to survey the problem. They caulked around the windows, they adjusted the weather stripping on our door, and even replaced the damaged hardwood floor in our dining room. As the storms continued, water intrusion continued . . .



more caulk, more front door adjustments, wall replacement and another hardwood floor. Each time, a worker would show up, spray the windows with a garden hose, and proudly proclaim that the problem was fixed! The front door had become a source of many dinner conversations. The weather stripping had not worked (replaced five times), adjustments to fix the one-inch gap, unsuccessful. Finally, after dozens of phone calls, CPS Builders agreed that the door needed to be re-hung. The door was replaced, again with errors. Light and water continued to seep through the door.

Months passed before we could get Levitt to come back and complete each and every project. It was always a struggle to get the complete diagnosis of anything or completion dates, as we have had 6 Supervisors in two years. Each time having to start "from the beginning", as no one at Levitt seems to have any paperwork from the previous Supervisor or work crew.

One morning, as I sat at my desk working, I noticed that our second hardwood floor was beginning to buckle. Taking a closer look I could see a pool of water had collected by the baseboard, it wasn't as noticeable as when the hurricane damage had occurred, but it was there. This not only occurred in our dining room, but along the front door in our foyer and the along the baseboard in our downstairs bedroom. Again, we called Levitt and Sons to come and look at the problem. They arrived with caulk in hand, sprayed a hose on the windows and AGAIN proudly declared that the problem had been fixed. We asked about the front door still not being fixed. The very next day, a worker arrives at our home with weather stripping for the door. The worker realized that weather-stripping would not remedy the situation. He stood back, and said, "Wow, I can't fix that, this is a bigger problem, and a lot of work." "No kidding", we replied, "That is why the builder sent you." "Well, I didn't schedule that type of repair into my day", the worker replied. "It will have to be rescheduled". No one got back to us for months.



What was becoming an unmanageable routine, we now had months of unanswered complaints and concerns falling on deaf ears. It was obvious that the source of the water intrusion had not been diagnosed. Levitt hired a remediation specialist to look at our home. This was Levitt's first and only attempt to fix the problem, instead of repairing damages. The engineer's operation was impressive. The wall in the dining room was sealed off with plastic (see Image July21). The bedroom upstairs above the dining room was also sealed off. The specialist found that the upstairs water intrusion was coming in through the stucco near the second story. The exterior wall was removed to find damp wood. The drywall was removed on both interior walls and moisture

removal/cleaning equipment was used. The exterior wall was replaced and finished. The drywall was completed. The remediation firm gave the Levitt workers instructions on how to finish this job. Agreements were made and everyone left for the day. The next day, Levitt workers showed up to paint the upstairs bedroom with equipment, but no paint. We had been supplying the builder's crew with our own materials for these repairs since we had custom colors for the rooms. For the sake of ease and closure, my wife got the paint needed for the Levitt team. The task was completed but not without fault. There was paint on the carpet, ceiling and not on the corners. The dining room was not even looked at. After all, they were just the painters . . . more time passes.

The dining room was left with hanging and sagging plastic. (See Image 8/21/05) My wife and I took endless days off work with no show crews, the appointments always needing to be rescheduled by their calendars; we grew more and more intolerant. Finally, we got a new Super. He claimed he was THE GUY and to get all our outstanding items addressed and completed. We shake our heads, once again to start the story from day one.

The morning the work crew was to show to finish the dining room drywall and hardwood floor a drip drip drip could be heard in the early morning as my wife was working on the computer. "Drip . . . Drip . . .Drip," My wife looked up to see drops coming from the ceiling and looked down to see a river running along the floor. The Supervisor shows up with his crew, but not to complete the work he thought. The water intrusion was obvious. As the crews attempt to remove the plastic, a horrific . . . The Levitt and Sons Team uncovered TONS of green, gray, white and black mold. EVERYONE panics, mostly the Levitt guys, as they don't want to touch the mold.



At that time I received a phone call at work from my wife "honey, you aren't going to believe what was growing under the plastic/remediation, there is water and mold along the entire floor and wall!" Levitt called their contractors to come and remove the plastic and flooring. Luckily, my wife was able to get pictures and video of our own crime scene.

When the contractors arrive within the hour the following conversation occurred. The Chem-Dry worker looked at the damage, and immediately called his supervisor on the two-way radio. The supervisor said, "Leave the premises immediately, that mold can be toxic, and we will not remove this type of problem."

The worker apologized to my wife, said he felt bad leaving but explained that he thought we needed someone "better equipped" to deal with this type of problem. Coleman Flooring arrived, only to be shocked with what they saw. The floor installer was not prepared for what he saw. He would not remove the floor, due to the nature of the mold growth.

The Levitt and Son's Supervisor panicked! He recruited a few other workers that were in our area from a nearby project. Even these gentlemen were shocked at what they saw. My wife's next call sounded desperate as she shouted to me on the phone "Dan, they are ripping everything out of the dining room, the area was not sealed off and the smell is unbelievably horrific! There is a circus in our house, please get home quick." When I came home 20 minutes later, the moldy part of the floor had been ripped out. Part of the drywall had been removed and workers were running in and out of the house.





I found a supervisor and insisted that a protective barrier be put up to protect the rest of the house from becoming infected with mold spores. As he rolled his eyes, he assured me "The moldy wood had been removed, the drywall was removed and we poured bleach on the floor, there is nothing to worry about." I insisted the barrier be put in place. He instructed workers to put up a piece of plastic with blue painter's tape. This ridiculous solution lasted all of about 6 hours. No humidifier or water removal equipment was used. The Super just wanted to know when was a good time to repair the drywall and install another floor. Again, not willing to find the source of water intrusion, just repair damages.

We had the wherewithal to hire a mold inspection company. The report that came back read as follows:

*Your lab results are attached. An **ELEVATED MOLD CONDITION** exists in your house. Elevated levels of **Cladosporium** and **Penicillium/Aspergillus** were detected in the upstairs front bedroom. These mold spores can be harmful to humans. Also a small amount of **Stachybotrys** was detected. **Stachybotrys can be toxic and poisonous when inhaled.** Elevated levels of **Penicillium/Aspergillus** were also detected in the dining room. Information concerning these mold spores is attached.*

The mold situation in your house would appear to be the result of chronic moisture problems that have still not been corrected by your builder.

Normally, no mold remediation work would begin until all the sources of moisture penetrating your house have been corrected. Cleaning and/or replacement of air supply and return ducts, the air handler/furnace, and wiping of walls and other surfaces should be expected.

No sampling was conducted to determine if any unusual mold conditions are present with your clothing, furniture, bedding, etc. Additional air and surface testing are suggested. Please call if you have questions or comments.

We didn't tell Levitt and Sons about this test immediately. We asked they obtain a mold test. They did honor this request, however they refused to test the entire house and chose just to test the dining room. The following week the report from Levitt stated that there were not elevated mold spores in our home - although the lab results were not attached. A drought had hit Central Florida from Feb 3 to May 23, we where not sure if we have continued water intrusion into our home, only continuation of Mold growth! May 23, 2006 the rains came and so did the water into our dining room - lucky for us there are no walls or floors and the water intrusion was easily seen.

It became apparent that we needed to seek legal counsel. This would seem to be an easy task, but because of conflict with many attorneys representing Levitt on other cases it took over four weeks. Our attorney sent a letter requesting some specific testing. The newest Super arrived a week later with two Mac Tec representatives. One to test the entire house for elevated mold counts; the other to test the roof for hopes of finding the source of water intrusion. This testing was conducted in mid July. They claimed they would get results to our attorney within a few weeks.

On August 5, 2006 I was diagnosed with AML. I contact the attorney to give him the latest update on my condition and that housing arrangements would need to be made, as I would not be allowed to return to my family's home due to the elevated mold condition. The Levitt attorney's asked for an extension to comply with Florida statues and denied our request for them to assist with living arrangements. After that, they did not reply to requests by our attorney for over six weeks. On the week of October 16, 2006 Levitt and Sons newest attorney stated that they are "working on a report from the July testing and will get it to us shortly." Last report took them seven days. Why does this report take them 3 months?

Where do things stand today



October 2006? I struggle daily with the fact that I CANNOT live with my family under the same roof, thanks to Levitt and Sons. I have a life threatening illness that will require 100% of my time and a positive attitude. The mold conditions in our home exacerbated my current illness. Levitt's inability to fix things correctly and allowed the removal of moldy building materials without sealing off the area correctly has not only deteriorated my entire family's health, but now it is consuming energy I need to get well. A good portion of our house is left unfinished. Our bedding and furniture has to be replaced. Our carpeting needs to be replaced.

Our air ducts need to be sanitized. Our walls need to washed and repainted. This stressful situation is draining our financial abilities. We can't sell the house, we can't live in the house, and we can't refinance the house. Where do we go from here?

It amazes me how unified people can be in time of need. My life threatening illness has brought people to me and my family asking what they can do to help. Some people have donated of themselves with blood and platelets. My sister is donating her bone marrow. My mother is helping me with living arrangements. Many people have sent cards and prayers. My wife and children are continuing to give me the love and support I need to hang on for dear life.

It is time! Levitt and Sons needs to step up to the plate and make the wrong right. They need to remedy this situation in an amicable manner so that I can heal in peace and make the best run for my life. Please make that dream happen.

Contact: webmaster@levittandsonshome.com





Oct. 2006. The picture above shows the dining room from the outside in its current state. Approx. 140 sq. ft of unlivable space. Also the unfinished work of the front door.



Oct. 2006. The picture above shows how the dining room has looked since December 2005 and still looks today. Water continues to come in when it rains.



Oct. 2006. The picture above shows unfinished work on the outside of the house. Missing shutters from when the workers painted and unpainted spots where unsuccessful attempts to seal the exterior of the house.