

# Wrong place, wrong time!

*Be ready when life happens. These grocery store situations illustrate the variety of environmental exposures that could affect your customer!*



## **Mold behind produce coolers – bodily injury & cleanup**

A persistent condensate leak behind the produce walk-in led to hidden moisture and mold colonization on drywall and wood framing. Several employees reported respiratory irritation; one customer with asthma alleged aggravated symptoms after prolonged shopping in the department. The owner was responsible for cleanup costs and injury claims.



## **Legionella from produce misters – bodily injury, cleanup & business interruption**

A local health department traced a small cluster of Legionnaires' disease to aerosol exposure from produce misters that had biofilm buildup after a maintenance lapse. The rooftop cooling tower was also tested as a potential source.



## **Refrigeration system leak (ammonia/HFC) – customer exposure**

During a routine restock, a line serving a freezer case failed, releasing refrigerant vapor into an aisle. Two customers and an associate complained of dizziness and throat irritation; EMS evaluated on site.



## **Odors from cleaning chemicals – unsafe conditions in store**

Overmixing a chlorine-based cleaner during overnight floor maintenance produced strong irritant fumes. Morning opening was delayed; two employees sought medical evaluation for eye and throat irritation; several customers complained online.

## Grocery Store Claims Scenarios



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### Heating/fueling storage tank leak – soil & potential groundwater

An older heating oil above-ground storage tank on the property's service side developed a pinhole leak, staining adjacent soil. Investigation identified limited subsurface impact toward a storm drain.



### Spill from delivery vehicle – loading area release

A vendor's box truck ruptured a diesel line while idling at the receiving dock, releasing fuel that flowed to a catch basin before the area was boomed. The owner was responsible for the emergency response and cost recovery.



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