

Pauline Osborne

I took a look at the report and was happy to hear you are looking at addressing fragrance and flooring issues. As someone who was injured from a toxin exposure, I am well aware of how toxic our environment has become. But I am hoping that other chemicals within fragrance (not only Phthalates) will be eventually addressed. I also see other issues within the flooring industry that need to change.

In the Spring of 2018 our lives would be forever changed. We had new hardwood floors placed and Swedish Finish was applied. It would be over 2 months before I would figure out that I was sick from the floors. That the finish was off-gassing formaldehyde and other VOCs. I would learn that Swedish Finish has been banned in other states and that off-gassing can occur for months. That if not done properly by a contractor, off-gassing can even extend longer. We thought with time the off-gassing would stop and moved out into our tipi for the summer. But 9 months later and attempts to move into the bedrooms where the floors were replaced, my symptoms would worsen. After the floors were removed, I would learn that not only did I have Multiple Chemical Sensitivity, but my 2 children as well (who are now 8 yo & 11 yo). I now also have Mast Cell Activation Syndrome as well. Prior to this I was healthier than I ever had been. We are now disabled and I am constantly working with our school to address issues around fragrance. In elementary school the biggest issue is the use of scented detergents and dryer sheets. Every basic aspect of our life takes so much more work and we no longer have the same access to services (even basic medical care) with how common the use of fragrance has become. Businesses try to dismiss my request for accommodations and it's exhausting. This didn't have to happen. We were never informed of what was in Swedish Finish and were told it would be safe to move back in after 3 days. Yet we could smell the floors after they were removed 2 blocks away. I have talked with others who have been injured by Swedish Finish and other flooring finishes. We thought hardwood floors was the healthier solution but we were not properly informed of the risks.

I've attached highlights of our story and how Swedish Finish has impacted our lives. I don't want to see this happen to others as in our area contractors continue to recommend Swedish Finish even to a family whose daughter has cystic fibrosis.

I've done a lot of research around Swedish Finish and Formaldehyde health issues using my training as a clinical nurse specialist. I'm happy to share some of these resources. Here couple of highlights:

1. VOC off-gassing with flooring finishes article:

<https://homeguides.sfgate.com/long-vocs-last-hardwood-floor-refinishing-70407.html>

2. An Update on Formaldehyde - United States of America Consumer Product Safety Commission

https://www.cpsc.gov/PageFiles/121919/AN_UPDATE_ON_FORMALDEHYDE_final_0113.pdf

"You can reduce exposure to high levels of formaldehyde by: *Installing wood floors or finishes that are not "acid-cured", which is a type of finish that is formaldehyde-based." (Swedish Finish is an acid-cured finish)

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I am open to talking further about this situation or environmental health issues (which has become a new passion of mine).

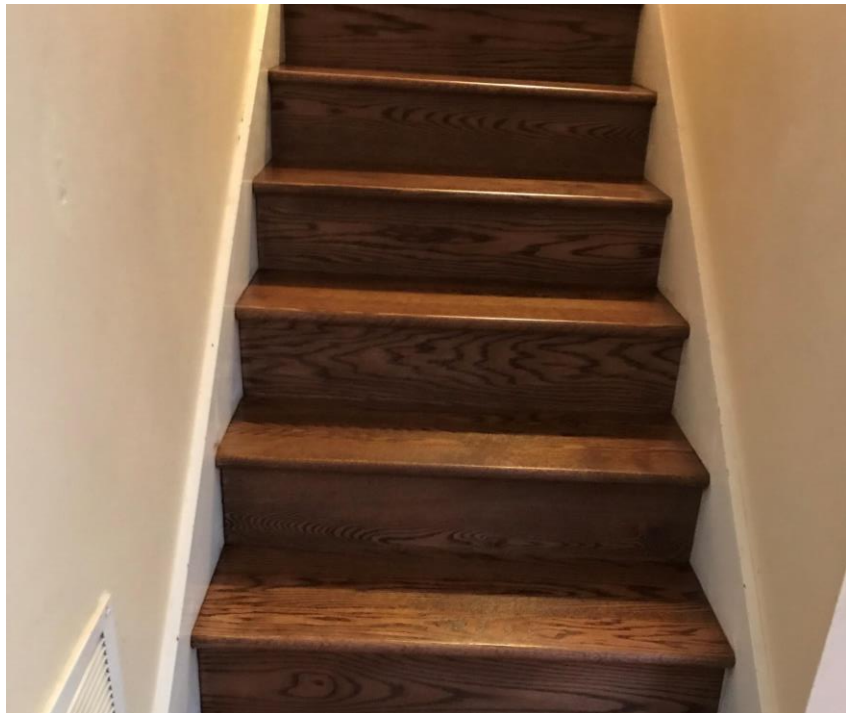
Sincerely,

Pauline Osborne MN, RN

Our Family Story of a Toxin Injury

Swedish Finish Hardwood Floors





When our health would take a drastic turn. In the end of March 2018, oak hardwood floors were placed and then Swedish Finish was applied with a dark stain on the upper level where the bedrooms are located. It would take me about 2 months of being sick to figure out the root cause.

On reflection, this is the week I first started showing early signs of toxin exposure. I had initially thought it was from the stress of participating in a filming project for NiaTV, but something just didn't seem right. I had been excited about the opportunity. When I arrived to Portland I noticed my clothes smelled of the flooring finish. We had gotten used to the smell and being away from home allowed me to notice it. I just didn't understand what I was really being exposed to at the time. I was having difficulty sleeping, my appetite decreased significantly, I was crying frequently and didn't feel like myself. I couldn't handle any bit of stress. My body was working hard to remove the toxins from my body which now explains the symptoms.



By the time I go to film, I am starting to feel better.



April 8th – 14th

April 24th – May 21st, 2018

Pauline has cold-like symptoms begin and after 2 weeks is treated for pneumonia (no CXR). Symptoms continue and Chest X-rays are normal. Peak flow is below normal as doctor states due to “inflammation”. Epstein-Barr Virus reactivated (had mono in graduate school years ago). This can occur when the body is under a large amount of stress including when exposed to toxins. Arwen has a severe ear infection.



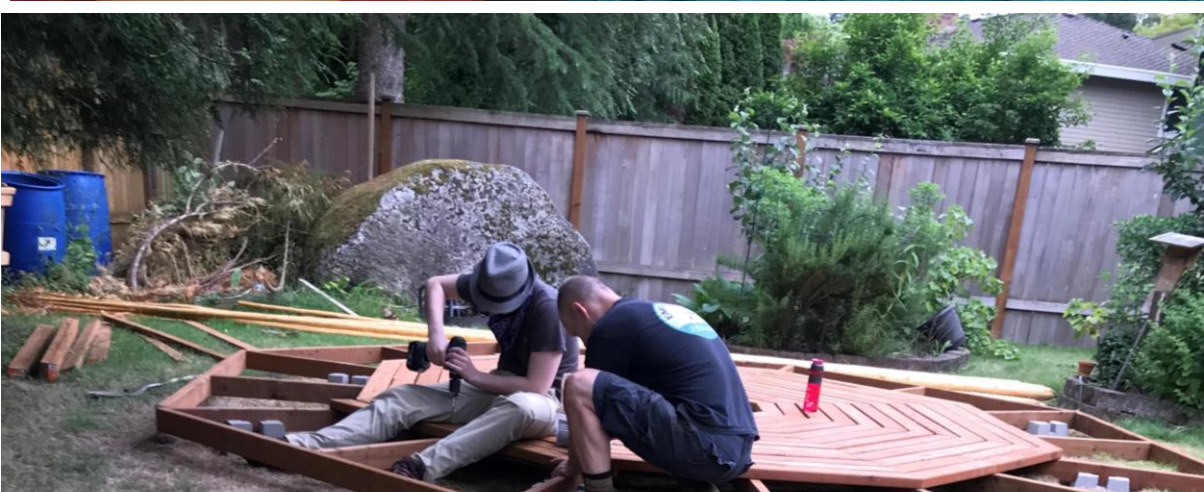
Other symptoms of toxin exposure include hair loss, brain fog, nausea, headaches, lung pain, neck pain, rash and difficulty sleeping. In July, I notice I'm nauseated by the smell of plastic and can't tolerate smoke from a campfire (early signs of Multiple Chemical Sensitivity, but I didn't know this at the time). We replace our Tupperware with glass.



The beginning of chronic fatigue



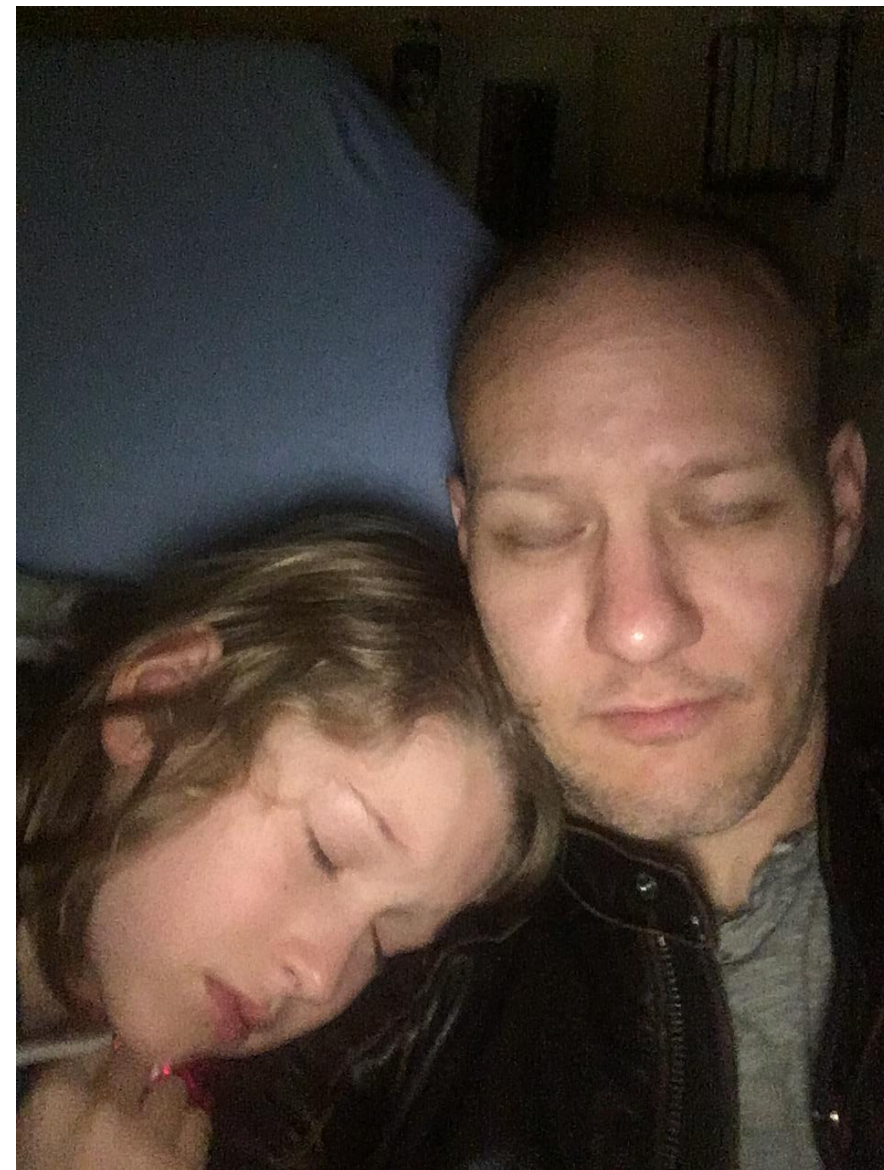
On June 18th, I wake up feeling short of breath and unable to breathe. After an hour of feeling like I'm suffocating I go to the ER. Vitals are stable and since previous lab work and X-rays are normal, the doctor doesn't know how to help. I know something is wrong. He sends me home with more antibiotics & steroids. When I get home, I notice the floors smell more (changes in outdoor temperature leads to more off-gassing). The next day I start doing research and reach out to a couple of providers who confirm it could be the flooring finish.



When we discover the floors are likely causing health problems, we move into our backyard at least to sleep. A friend helps us build a deck so we can use our tipi without worrying about rain. We stay here through most of summer until the fire season hits and then sleep in our basement. Symptoms slowly start to improve. One day in July a sitter helps tidy up in our bedrooms since we limit our time there for showers and getting clothes, she notices chest tightness in a short period of time and sleeps most of the following day.

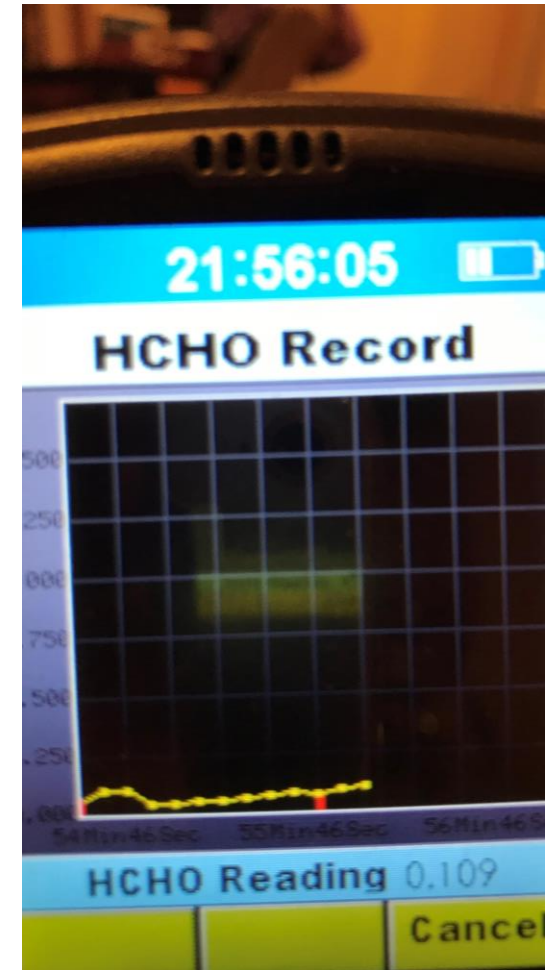
Our son Adrian ends up getting croup twice in a year. Which is rare for someone who is 9 – 10 years old. Adrian is frequently sick with cold or flu viruses.

It wasn't until the floors were removed and my brain fog started to lift that I saw how much the kids had been affected as well.





	Downstairs		Main		Landing		Master BR		Adrian		Armen	
	VOC	HCOH	VOC	HCOH	VOC	HCOH	VOC	HCOH	VOC	HCOH	VOC	HCOH
7/25	.22	.02	.37	.045	.58	.081	.68	.10	-	-	-	-
7/30	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.0	.135	-	-	1.2	.13
8/12	-	-	.63	.07	1.0	.12	-	-	-	-	-	-
8/11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.85	.122
8/14	-	-	-	-	-	-	.12	.015	.38	.048	1.2	.15
8/18	-	-	-	-	-	-	.39	.048	-	-	.83	.059
9/4	-	-	-	-	-	-	.225	.028	-	-	-	-
9/9	-	-	-	-	-	-	.496	.070 ^a	-	-	.386	.038 ^a
10/9	.716 ^b	.107 ^b	-	-	-	-	.53	.080	-	-	-	-
10/28							.12					
10/30							.038					
11/16							.157				.103	
11/21							.06					
1/24							1.3	.13	.641	.092		



Raw data we recorded with a personal VOC monitor. HCOH is Formaldehyde, which I tracked in the second column for each room tested. The W.H.O. established indoor air quality guideline for short-term formaldehyde exposure (no more than 30 minutes) is 0.1 mg/m³. We regularly tested levels above this value. And we were living in it.

Formaldehyde Conversion 1 ppm = 1.23 mg/m

OHSa Guidelines 0.75 ppm in 8 hour period: <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/mmg/mmg.asp?id=216&tid=39>

Home Air Analysis For: Osborne15035
Home Tested: 15035 NE 68th St.
Redmond, WA 98052

Sampling Professional: Jason Kester
Kester Clear Environmental Solutions
6947 Coal Creek Parkway SE #298
Newcastle, WA 98059

Report Number: 74930
Laboratory ID: 74930-1

Thank you for using IAQ Home Survey!
If you have questions about your report,
please contact your service provider who
performed this test.

Order Date: 11/07/2018
Scan Date: 11/07/2018
Report Date: 11/09/2018

Client Sample ID: Upstairs Hallway
Sample Volume (L): 4.0
Date Sampled: 11/02/2018
Sample Type: TDT ZZ409
Sample Condition: Acceptable

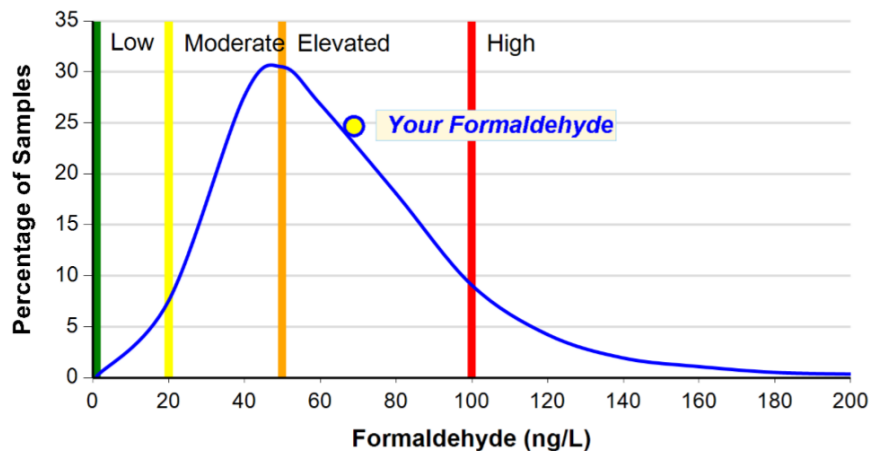
Formaldehyde Concentration: 68 ng/L (55 ppb)

Your Formaldehyde Level (Highlighted)

Low	Moderate	Elevated	High
< 20 ng/L	20-50 ng/L	50-100 ng/L	> 100 ng/L
< 16 ppb	16-40 ppb	40-80 ppb	> 80 ppb

Recommendation: Consider locating and removing formaldehyde sources. See formaldehyde sources section for more information.

All IAQ Survey Formaldehyde Results



This chart represents the Formaldehyde distribution of over 7,000 samples.

Approximately half the samples have concentrations in the 30-70 ng/L range.

In the fall of 2018 we attempted to move back into our bedrooms after monitoring formaldehyde levels. But my symptoms would get worse. I found a professional to test the formaldehyde levels. We then contacted a lawyer and we would have to wait over 6 weeks to get additional testing done by Goss Flooring’s lawyers. Our lawyer has not shared these results and we were told they were lower than our findings.

Having some basic understanding that I likely had Multiple Chemical Sensitivity, I knew it didn’t matter what the results were. The damage had already been done and I would react to even low levels. Unfortunately, we only had professional testing done 9 months later and temperature fluctuations could also change the test results.

Based on our symptoms Jason Kester recommended we have the floors removed. Goss Flooring offered to sand down the floors and refinish them which highlighted their lack of understanding of the risks of their product. This would release fine particles of Swedish Finish into the air, plus the finish had gone through the cracks and under the floorboards. There’s a good chance we would continue to be exposed.

NOTICE TO CUSTOMER

This contractor is registered with the state of Washington, Registration No. GOSSFFI851P1 and has posted with the state a bond of \$6,000 for the purpose of satisfying claims against the contractor for breach of contract including negligent or improper work in the conduct of the contractor's business. The expiration date of this contractor's registration is 10/21/2017.

THIS BOND MAY NOT BE SUFFICIENT TO COVER A CLAIM THAT MIGHT ARISE FROM THE WORK DONE UNDER YOUR CONTRACT.

This bond is not for your exclusive use because it covers all work performed by this contractor. The bond is intended to pay valid claims up to \$6,000 that you and other customers, suppliers, subcontractors, or taxing authorities may have.

FOR GREATER PROTECTION YOU MAY WITHHOLD A PERCENTAGE OF YOUR CONTRACT.

You may withhold a contractually defined percentage of your construction contract as retainage for a stated period of time to provide protection to you and help insure that your project will be completed as required by your contract.

YOUR PROPERTY MAY BE LIENED.

If a supplier of materials used in your construction project or an employee or subcontractor of your contractor or subcontractors is not paid, your property may be liened to force payment and you could pay twice for the same work.

FOR ADDITIONAL PROTECTION, YOU MAY REQUEST THE CONTRACTOR TO PROVIDE YOU WITH ORIGINAL "LIEN RELEASE" DOCUMENTS FROM EACH SUPPLIER OR SUBCONTRACTOR ON YOUR PROJECT.

The contractor is required to provide you with further information about lien release documents if you request it. General information is also available from the state Department of Labor and Industries.

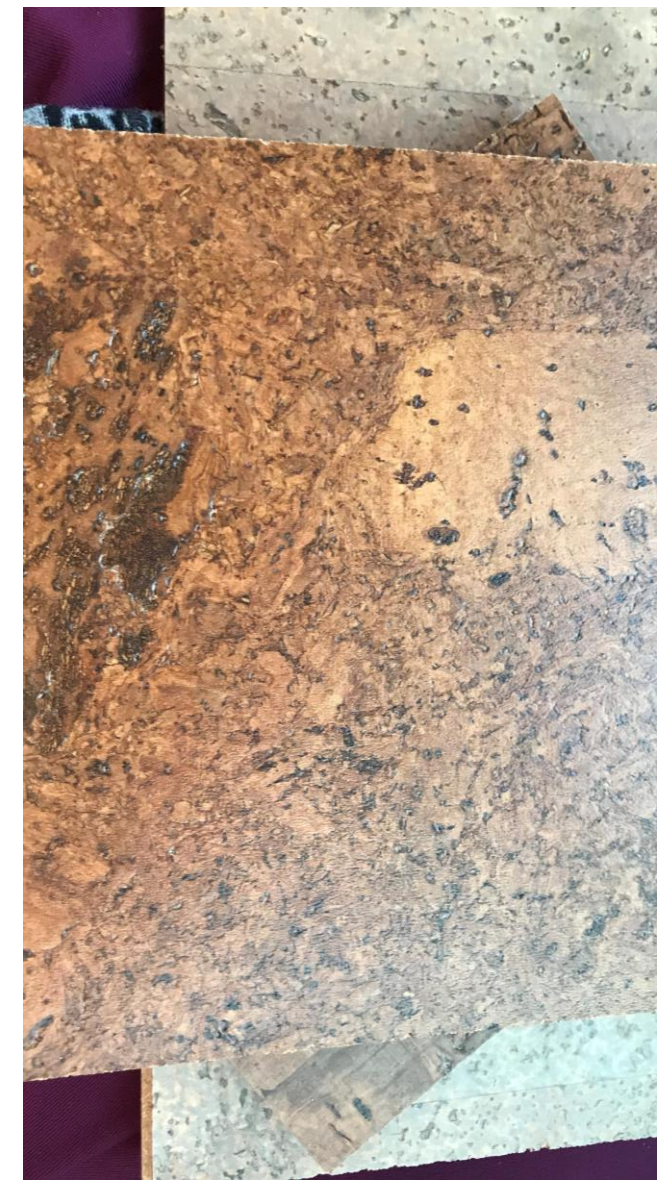
PLEASE TAKE THE FOLLOWING INTO CONSIDERATION WHEN PREPARING TO SAND YOUR HARDWOOD FLOORS:

- 1) Swedish finish is not to be applied where pregnancy is involved. Children under the 12 years of age or persons with respiratory problems are not to be present prior to all odors having dissipated.
- 2) Consideration should be given to not exposing pets, plants, flowers and food during the first 48 hours.
- 3) Non-Toxic Finishing systems are available upon request.
- 4) You will experience a certain amount of dust. It is important that furnace blowers are not activated at this time. Customer responsible for light dust cleanup and paint touch up.
- 5) We do not recommend foot traffic for 24 hours after completion, and only light use for 3 weeks.

This is what is on the back of the contract we signed. I look at this differently knowing what I know now.

Please note the area circled in red where it states "children under 12 years of age or persons with respiratory problems are not to be present prior to all odors having dissipated." I asked the contractor verbally if it would be safe to move in after 3 days and he said "yes". He knew we had 2 young children at home. We had no clue that there would be problems after this time frame. We thought the issues around toxicity was for a short time. We didn't realize they could be off-gassing and smelling for months after.

We were never informed of the chemicals in the finish and the health risks of these chemicals. We would have never used Swedish Finish if we understood the true risks of the product.



Once we had the test results we moved back downstairs and set up our dressers and clothes in the garage. We went to Green Building Supply in Seattle and they helped us choose cork flooring. But working with a lawyer was slow and we were still getting exposed when we needed to use a shower as well as likely through the air vents, so eventually we rented an AirBNB.



Just when we were going to move into an AirBNB our heater died. Guess someone was trying to get us out of the house =). We celebrated Adrian's birthday away from home. It was a stressful time for all of us with the kids still being in school as well.

We worked to bring some play amongst the chaos and Elf on the Shelf followed us wherever we went.

Adrian had a plant-based fruit cake for his birthday which was delicious! Once we knew about the toxin exposure, we focused on eating mostly a plant-based diet with some grains and meat. Using food as medicine as much as possible.

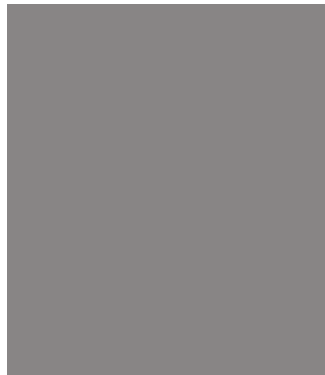




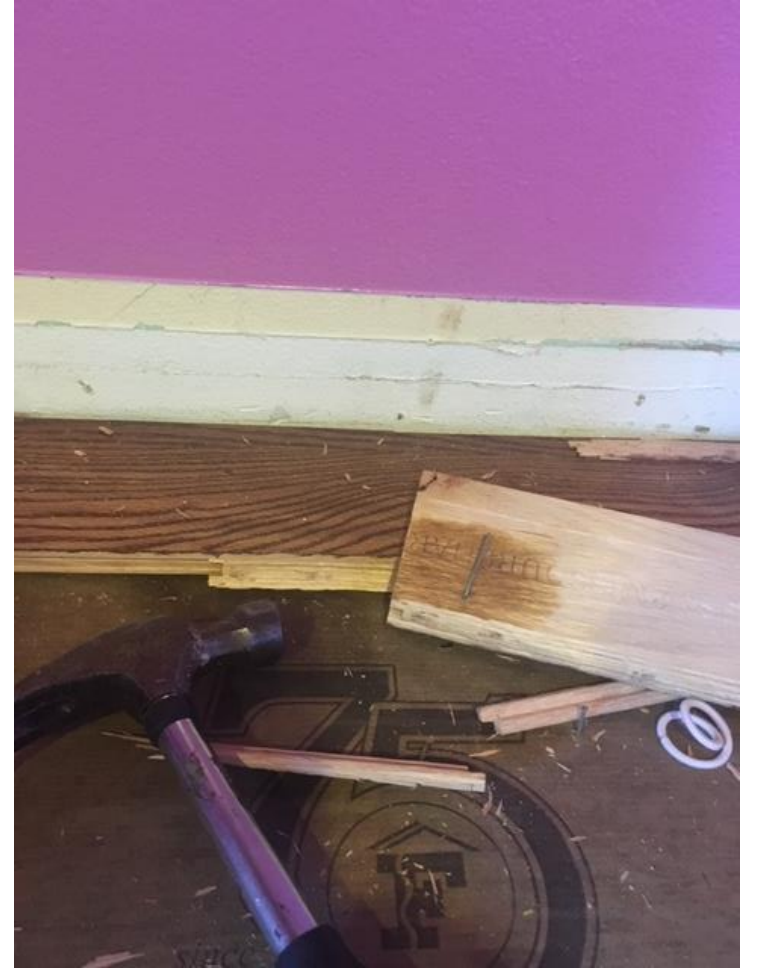
AirBNB #2 – Week #2 of being out of the house. Ended up celebrating the Winter Solstice here and got a free decorated tree from Home Depot. (Though now we know the spray used on the tree will likely cause us to react). The owner of this AirBNB let us stay an extra night for free after hearing our story.



During a very stressful time when people are celebrating the holidays our friends and neighbors came out to support us. Friends donated \$ to pay for the cost of food while Ella from Secret Ingredients volunteered her time to prepare meals. One person gave us a gift certificate for Task Rabbit providing us with a contractor to help with the floors. We had neighbors coming over to help tear the floors out, put in cork floors, and cut and place trim. Others helped us with moving from one AirBNB to the next or putting up Christmas lights. And thanks to them we were able to fulfill our kids' wishes of being home for Christmas.



The stairs going to our lower level were replaced and stained with Swedish Finish by Goss Flooring as well. However, we couldn't smell any off-gassing so we left them in. According to Glitsa the manufacturer of the Swedish Finish used, things that can impede curing and extend off-gassing includes a dark heavy stain, particularly if also not given proper drying time.

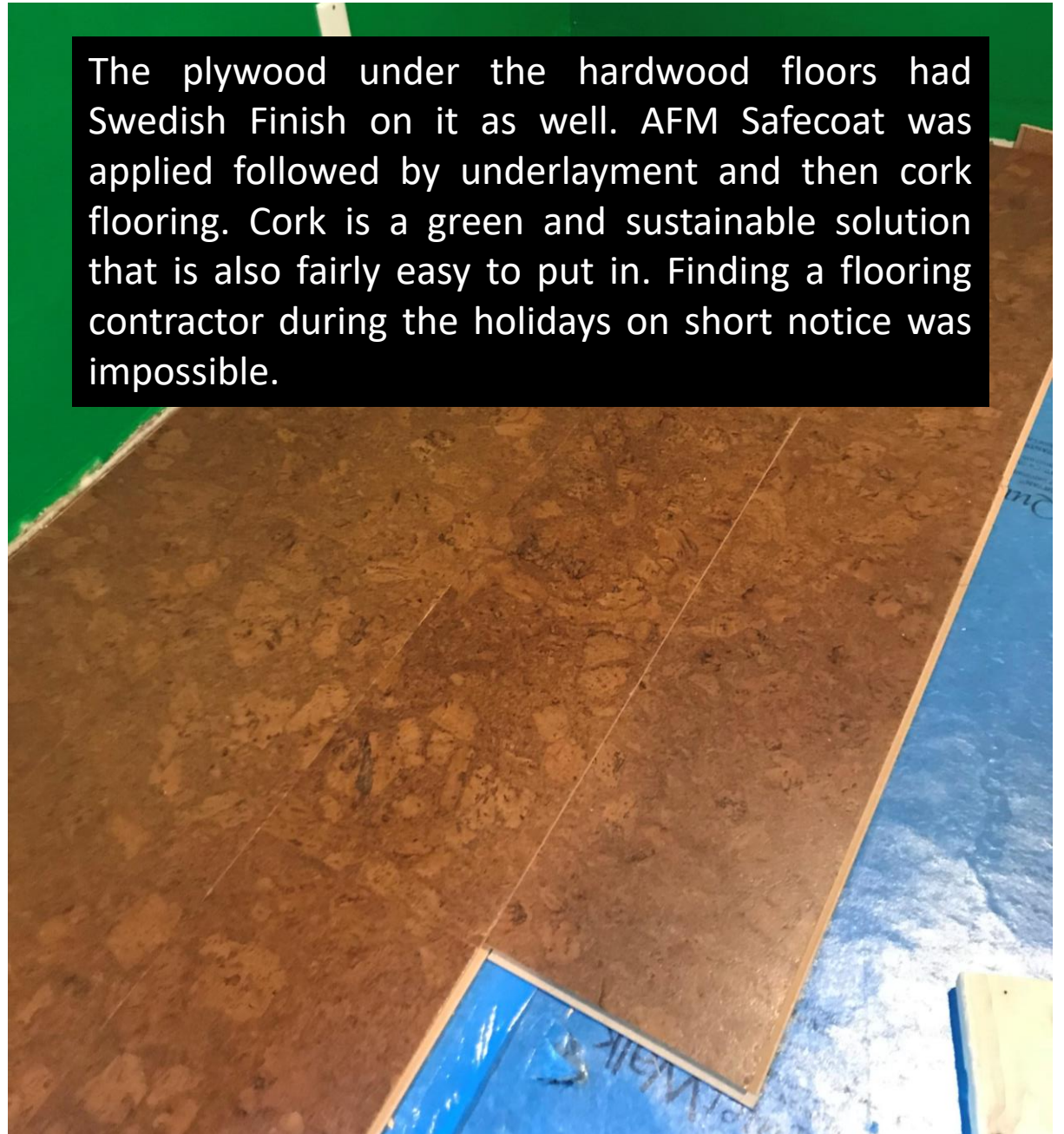


You can see how the stain went between and under the boards and how we could continue to be exposed to formaldehyde and other toxic chemicals if the floors were sanded down. Plus I know there was a PTSD element to keeping the floors in the home. When the boards were piled up in our front yard, you could smell them from 2 blocks away. We have kept samples of the boards.



The new trim we had placed in the Spring had absorbed the Swedish Finish. We needed a green alternative for the trim and used oak rubbed with Tung oil.

The plywood under the hardwood floors had Swedish Finish on it as well. AFM Safecoat was applied followed by underlayment and then cork flooring. Cork is a green and sustainable solution that is also fairly easy to put in. Finding a flooring contractor during the holidays on short notice was impossible.





Help from our Friends & Neighbors



Home for Christmas with new floors and a hope that we can finally heal. But it would take a few months for us to realize the long-term health consequences of the Swedish finish. We would learn how common low levels of toxins had become in our environment and how limited we are in participating in society.





I, Pauline, enjoy hiking, dancing, teaching and spending time with my family. I used to love swimming and socializing, but due to the common use of toxic chemicals this is difficult.

My experience as a nurse, healthcare navigator and body awareness practitioner through Nia, enabled me to identify the root cause of my illness. As a clinical nurse specialist I was always doing research to determine best practice and find the answers.

I now have Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) and Mast Cell Activation Syndrome. Every aspect of my life has been impacted by the flooring project. I went from working out 5-7 times a week either teaching Nia or swimming. I was growing my business, hiring in contractors, working on a Nia specialty program called "Moving to Heal", leading workshops and events, managing a household and raising 2 children. I was healthier than I had ever been. That drastically changed after the floors went in and since all this has begun, I have slowly changed the way I live. I now teach 3 Nia classes a week (for my health and sanity) and see about 1-2 clients a week. My focus is on healing myself and family and creating a safer environment in our schools and community.

It was a couple of months after the floors were removed that I understood what a diagnosis of multiple chemical sensitivity really meant. I found myself crashing after spending a couple of different evenings with a group of women. I soon realized it was from the fragrant products they were wearing.



Adrian loves Fortnite, Minecraft, Running, gymnastics, science and hanging out with friends. He used to love soccer, but I noticed he was struggling more in soccer as he didn't have the energy to keep up like he used to.

Most of his friends and their parents have been accommodating. For awhile he couldn't go to his best friend's house until the parents removed their air fresheners and stopped using scented detergent. Another friend would just change his clothes while visiting.

There were 2 incidents where we made the connection that he had MCS as well. One was when staying at a friend's house that used scented detergents (which pollutes the entire home) and when wearing a soccer jersey washed with scented detergent. He was super emotional, felt extremely weak and got stomach pain. He struggles with brain fog, muscle aches and depression with chemical exposures.



Arwen LOVES cats, enjoys playing with friends, doing gymnastics and dancing.

But her ability to go out into the world, visit with friends without having a reaction has now been limited. She loved doing sleepovers with her best friend, T. But her friend's place was not safe due to the amount of fragrances used in the household. And T. didn't want to wear different clothes or wash her hair with different shampoo. T. liked her perfume and said it was part of who she was so she didn't feel comfortable doing playdates with Arwen anymore. As a parent, this broke my heart and was just another example of how people choose "scents" over people.

It was a playdate with T. when the girls were playing with perfume and we were called because Arwen had a migraine, when we first realized Arwen had MCS as well. She also has issues with depression, anxiety, fatigue, stomach/throat pain, difficulty concentrating with chemical exposures.

I had to advocate for the removal of air fresheners at gymnastics that was polluting the entire gym and making the business inaccessible. After a few weeks and the businesses' lawyer being involved it was finally removed so Arwen & Adrian could continue doing what they love.

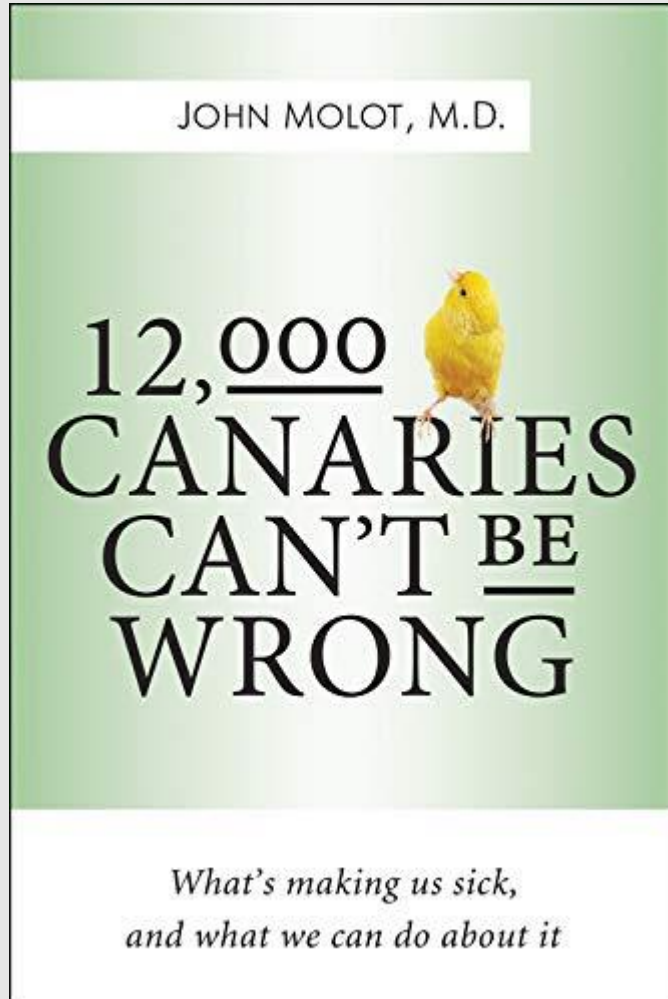


James loves backpacking, gardening, cooking healthy food and playing video games. He is a software engineer at Microsoft and works hard to support his family.

He has done his best to be the rock in the family as his wife and 2 children now struggle with a chronic illness. His health has been less impacted than the rest of the family, but he may have a milder form of chemical sensitivity that requires evaluation. He can no longer drink alcohol and seems to react with strong perfumes and air fresheners. He's also had a lot more issues with muscle pain and increase susceptibility to injury.

He worries about his family and has had to take on even more responsibility with managing a household. He's constantly adapting meals to accommodate changes in diet and does his best to keep his family safe. His construction skills have come in handy when it comes to updating our home to make it safer. The stress of seeing his family suffer and wanting to create a safe environment has been overwhelming at times.

About Multiple Chemical Sensitivity



- Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) is a medical condition characterized by a heightened sensitivity to chemicals. People who have MCS become ill when exposed to a variety of chemicals, many of which are commonly encountered in everyday life. Some people have only mild chemical sensitivities, while others have a more severe form of the illness called MCS.
<http://www.chemicalsensitivityfoundation.org/pdf/What-Is-MCS-by-Ann-McCampbell.pdf>
- Some leading Experts:
 - Dr. Ann McCampbell
 - Dr. Anne Steinemann
 - Dr. John Molot – author of 12,000 Canaries Can't Be Wrong
 - Dr. L. Christine Oliver
- Stories of people impacted by MCS and some leading experts
 - <http://www.chemicalsensitivityfoundation.org/>

The days of sending my kids to school with ease are now gone. I'm constantly working with the school to prevent reactions. Both kids don't want to bother their teachers, so they often don't speak up and they come home an emotional wreck and I have to figure out what caused their reactions. The school has been working with us to create a system so they can safely remove themselves from an exposure without getting into "trouble".



Fragrance Free Zone

We have some students who have a sensitivity to fragrances. We have created Fragrance-Free Zones in their classrooms but would also like to reduce the amount of fragrance in our school. This will reduce the likelihood of symptoms for these students such as nausea, headaches, stomach pain, anxiety, depression, and difficulty concentrating and fatigue.



We would appreciate your help in reducing the amount of fragrance in their environment when you come to school. This is especially true for large events such as Meet and Greet on Thursday.

The first steps you can take include:

- Avoid wearing perfume or cologne - Perfumes can cause discomfort for many people, not just those who are sensitized.
- Avoid essential oils - Essential oil labeling is not regulated and people with fragrance sensitivities can even react to the purest brands.
- Avoid any strong-smelling personal care products such as scented lotions and deodorants.

I'm grateful the school had experience with another student who had MCS so they were able to help us get started, but reactions can vary depending on the person. With experience we've made changes to their health plan. I've written letters and checklists to encourage parents to switch their products. Unfortunately, scented detergents & dryer sheets is common and can pollute the indoor air of a classroom. We still struggle with this issue and it's going to take time to educate our community.



Target is one of the few safe places we can go clothes shopping (as long as we avoid the cleaning supplies aisle and some bathrooms). We'd love to buy used clothing, but most people use scented detergents and/or dryer sheets.



Due to reactions, we replace our gas stovetop with electric, but I'm reacting to it even without a smell. That's what the California Warning Label seen upon delivery meant so it gets removed.



We slowly set up a new kitchen outside. First using a propane stove and eventually setting up our new electric stovetop in hopes that with time it will off-gas and be able to come back in.

But we learn that we also react to smoke from cooking and we can't use the oven without a reaction. Knowing this, we eventually have an awning built so my husband doesn't get wet while cooking.

We also get a large toaster oven and James (the physicist at heart) builds a Faraday cage as the microwave exceeds safety regulations and causes a reaction. James is the main cook and while I may be able to cook some meals that don't smoke, I'm also limited by the scented dryer sheets that pollute the outside air.



In the Spring of 2019 we went on a camping trip we had booked prior to knowing we had MCS. We knew we may have to leave because of campfires. When we arrived it was late, and the campground was polluted with smoke and gas generators. We found a place behind our campground to set up a tent and I stayed away from our main site. We ended up leaving a day early and canceling our other camping trips. No more car camping or campfires for us.



In the late spring of 2019, I noticed I was reacting when our gas furnace was on. We had just replaced our furnace in December of 2018. Because we didn't need it and there were other problems to be addressed, we waited until the weather started getting cooler in the fall to figure out a solution.

Bob's Heating & Air Conditioning was amazing to work with and brought in many experts to find a solution for us. They even sent a VOC expert who tested for gas leakage, which was fine. The VOC expert said that for some people they react to the "charred dust" from a gas furnace. We ended up with an electric heat pump and are grateful to have a warm house again.





A big part of who I am is my smile. It's how I connect with people. Smiling also helps me feel better. Having to wear a mask has been an emotional struggle for me. It angers me. I sometimes hear statements like "why don't you just wear a mask". Unfortunately, this mask doesn't work well for chemicals and I'd need to wear a gas mask. But what people don't realize is the chemicals that are in the air get on our clothes, hair and skin (similar to tobacco smoke). A mask doesn't fully protect one from exposures.

After taking this picture, I would return home from pumping gas and find myself having an emotional breakdown. I didn't realize that I was continuing to be exposed to the gas fumes from my hair and clothes. That if I took a shower, I would have started feeling better more quickly. Now my husband pumps gas and has to wear something over his clothes when pumping if I'm in the car with him. I'd love an electric car, but even if we could afford one we would have to find a used car free of tobacco and chemical smells. New cars off-gas too many chemicals.



Traveling now takes so much more work. Many hotels use scented detergents, fabric softeners and air fresheners. Some hotels may accommodate with notice, but even if the sheets are safe, the mattresses can smell of perfume and cologne from previous costumers. On this trip to Canada, we ended up using our own bedding, bringing an air purifier and requesting air fresheners outside our room be removed. And we're constantly avoiding people smoking or wearing perfume. We limit our traveling now and are not able to fly.



Many public restrooms contain air fresheners that cause reactions in our family. Some places are starting to understand that fragrance-free hand soap is best to protect our water. However, as in the images here this bathroom had fragrance-free hand soap and an air freshener. Indoor air pollution not even being considered.

A large amount of my time is being spent educating my students, clients, friends, family, school and community around environmental health issues. Having 2 children with MCS, I work hard as their parent within my energy capacity to create some normalcy in their lives. So they can go to school and be with friends. Yes, we have lost friendships and there are things we can no longer do. But I can't force them to live in a bubble.



NO SMOKING **NO FRAGRANCE**

Health and societal effects from exposure to fragranced consumer products

...“Finally, for public officials, the problem of “secondhand scents,” or indirect exposure to fragranced products, has parallels to secondhand tobacco smoke.

Prevention from fragrance product exposure will enable individuals to work in their workplaces, attend school, and function in society without suffering involuntary harm.” ...

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2211335516301449>



GIVE
THE GIFT OF
CLEAN AIR
QUIT
FRAGRANCE

Fragnanced products can cause asthma, allergies, birth defects, cancer, chemical injury, cognitive issues, diabetes, dizziness, migraines, neuro-toxicity, obesity, etc. They can make it difficult for people to function in life.



rebel thriver

You're not a victim for sharing your story. You're a survivor setting the world on fire with your truth. And you never know who needs your light, your warmth, and your raging courage.

-Alex Elle

I'm not saying your perfume is too strong. I'm just saying the canary was alive before you got here.

Its exhausting being an advocate and I wish I had someone who could help advocate for us. But as an RN, I know I'm in a unique position. I find many people with multiple chemical sensitivity and fragrance sensitivities don't speak up. And if they do, their concerns are dismissed. When I speak up for my family, I am speaking up for all those who are suffering alone and in silence. If our story can have some sense of purpose, I can keep moving forward through the pain and suffering. I've created a sustainability chair position through the PTA at our school to start addressing environmental health issues and how it impacts the health and learning of our students. I also plan to participate in our city's accessibility committee.

This year we don't have to worry about not being home for Christmas. But we have to create new ways of doing things. Unfortunately, myself and Arwen reacted to the tree being inside. Plus some of the ornaments smell of fragrance and we have to dispose of them. So the tree is now on our back porch. Adrian wore a mask while I observed from inside as a neighbor was using scented dryer sheets while we decorated.



So much has changed over the past year. We must be much more aware of our environment and be willing to adapt and change on an ongoing basis. We don't like being a nuisance, but it's the only way we can protect ourselves from further injury and a worsening in our health condition. We miss just BEING. We have to pay attention to the details and it's exhausting. We often don't feel safe and must make an extra effort to create a safe environment.



Nature is my medicine. It's where I feel my best and can breathe with more ease. Where I can cry and release the pain. Where I can regain my strength to keep moving forward.

Healing takes work and I carve out time to get on the trails at least once a week.





We've started considering the idea of buying land as living in the city with MCS is difficult. There's definitely a difference in air quality. Our energy capacity and finances is what holds us back. And we need to find land where we don't have to worry about wood burning all the time. I know that part of what is holding me back from healing is being in the city. And if we could at least have a place to retreat to and a house that is with a healthy environment, it would be the next step.

We look healthy.

We look happy.

We have an [invisible disability](#).

We were injured by a hardwood flooring project gone wrong and there was no consumer protections. No strict government regulations. No banning of Swedish Finish. No accountability to those who were injured before us. No education. No informed consent.

We suffer. We grieve. We have our health taken away. We have a mom who is ill as well and a dad who is stressed.

We are discriminated against and don't have the same access to services without being chemically assaulted even further.

We need your help to hold Goss Flooring & Glitsa accountable and demand better consumer protections. No one else needs to suffer.



Thank you for taking the time to
read our story.

Please feel free to contact me as noted below.

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