

**DOCKET**

**09-AFC-9**

DATE APR 18 2010

RECD. APR 20 2010

**DECLARATION OF  
Dr. Robert Schumacher**

I, Robert Schumacher, declare as follows:

1. I am presently practicing as a medical doctor and member of Pediatric Partners in Ridgecrest, California.
2. I have professional experience treating San Joaquin Valley Fever (Coccidioidomycosis) patients.
3. The prepared testimony that I have signed is the result of my professional experience and knowledge.
4. It is my professional opinion that the prepared testimony is valid and accurate with respect to the issue(s) addressed therein.
5. I am personally familiar with the facts and conclusions related in the testimony and, if called as a witness could testify competently thereto.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Dated: April 18, 10

Signed: Robert Schumacher MD

At: Ridgecrest, California

I am a pediatrician and general practice doctor who has served the Ridgecrest community for 17 years and am familiar with the threat of Coccidioidomycosis, commonly called Valley Fever.

Normally, I diagnose and treat approximately one case every few years in my office, but I experienced a much larger influx of patients with this infection a number of years ago. This increase occurred during the period when the Naval facility at China Lake was removing old housing. I treated a total of six patients with Valley Fever symptoms during, and immediately after, that demolition work. Since the work involved an area immediately adjacent to Ridgecrest, at a distance of 1 to 3 miles from the occupied center of Ridgecrest, and this is the only large increase in Coccidioidomycosis during the period I've served here, I conclude that the two events are directly related.

The housing removal involved all aspects normally associated with demolition, including structure removal, cement pad destruction and removal and vegetation uprooting and removal. All aspects of the work, including final grading to level the disturbed area, were done with dust mitigation by water soaking by the government contractor. The medical community recognizes the danger of the Coccidioidomycosis spores, and uses extreme measures in their laboratories when dealing with blood, or tissue samples, from suspected Valley Fever patients. This experience leads me to believe that the simple act of water application to control dust may be inadequate to completely control the spread of these spores from disturbed earth.

Coccidioidomycosis is a fungal infection for which little knowledge is held. The infection can be recognized by blood test and symptoms, but little can be done to detect the presence of the fungi in the soil and few drugs are available to effectively control the resulting infection. Many, if not most, patients are rather asymptomatic and probably don't require a doctors care, while others may die from the infection.



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Dr. Robert Schumacher, MD

April 17, 2010