

## NORMAN CENTRAL LIBRARY REMEDIATION CLOSURE – OCTOBER 2024 – FREQUENTLY-ASKED-QUESTIONS

- **What has occurred at Norman Central Public Library?**

Norman Public Library Central, 103 W. Acres, is currently closed due to mold issues. Officials were made aware of this mold detection on November 15, 2023, and took steps to remediate as quickly as possible. The facility is owned by the City of Norman and operated through Pioneer Library System. Patron and staff safety remains the topmost priority of both entities.

- **How long will the library be closed?**

Via the [rolling updates webpage](#) at Normanok.gov, the City of Norman announced on April 12, 2024, that Norman Public Library will be closed indefinitely.

- **How will Norman Central Public Library services be affected?**

As of February 2024, Pioneer Library System has set up a [Library Lab](#) at 121 S. Santa Fe, Suite 119, in Norman. Additional or updated information on services or programs of the library can be found at [pioneerlibrarysystem.org](#).

- **Initially, how was the aforementioned mold detected and who was made aware?**

City staff hired a contractor to examine water intrusion issues in Fall 2023 and during that examination, indications of possible mold were visible and a mold test was requested by city staff immediately. Under the direction of Parks & Recreation of the City of Norman, who is responsible for building maintenance of City-owned facilities through one of its divisions, a test was scheduled at the first available date: November 14, 2023. Contractors returned results to our Parks & Recreation team on November 15, 2023, and collaborative communication to let the public and applicable parties know of the discovery ensued.

- **Has mold been a problem in the central branch previously?**

Not to the knowledge of City staff but roof leaks have been observed over the past several years and the City of Norman has worked with contractors to remedy issues of which we were made aware. Remedies have included the replacement of the lower roof in 2020, as well as sealing windows and annual roof repairs. Concerning the issues causing the indefinite closure: mold was discovered within cavities of the facility and initial survey work showed that due to normal range humidity levels maintained, visible mold was slow to appear.

- **What contractors designed and built Norman Public Library Central?**

The facility was designed by [MSR](#) and built by [Flintco](#).

- **Where was the mold found?**

Initially, six areas of concern included: A staff office on level one, SW Corner of level one, study rooms on level two, Pioneer Room of level three, SE Bay Windows, and the fire escape stairwell. As the investigation continued following November 16, more areas of concern on each level of the library were discovered by the contractor. Reports that can be made available to the public on this situation have been and will continue to be [publicly archived](#) at Normanok.gov. See general information on mold at <https://www.epa.gov/mold/mold-frequently-asked-questions>.

- **How is the situation being handled?**

- [Cavins Group](#) was hired to carry out initial remediation work upon the discovery of mold.
- The City of Norman engaged with Envelope Consulting Company [CDC](#) in January 2024.
- City Council convened in Executive session regarding this matter on [April 2, 2024](#).
- City Council authorized City staff to retain outside counsel to “provide legal representation to and on behalf of the City regarding design and/or construction issues” regarding the library on [April 23, 2024](#).
- The City of Norman filed a lawsuit against multiple parties in October 2024.
- Additional updates will be provided to the community through the [rolling updates webpage](#) at [Normanok.gov](#) as they are made available and can be disclosed.

- **Why has this issue occurred in a relatively new facility?**

This facility opened to the public in November 2019. The cause is expected to be determined as full investigations and findings are shared by expert parties. At this time, water intrusion stemming from roof and envelope issues are believed to have contributed to mold growth.

- **What details are available regarding the mold discovered at the library?**

Molds are a natural part of the environment and can be found almost anywhere that moisture and oxygen are present. There are many types of mold and mold growth can occur on wood, paper, carpet, and insulation, among other things. The hazard of molds is relative and may be dependent on the type, degree, level of disturbance and other factors. The molds of concern initially identified in this instance include stachybotrys and fusarium. Reports, summaries, maps and more can be found in the publicly available [archive](#) at [Normanok.gov](#).

- **Is the library being torn down?**

There are no plans to tear the library down at this time. Recent activity at the library may be seen, to include moving indoor collections to an off-site location as this situation is resolved.

- **How can I stay up-to-date with the latest on this situation?**

Updates and reports will continue to be posted/linked for the community at: [Normanok.gov/news/norman-public-library-central-close-remediation](#).

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