

Scientists debate cause ...

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or a parasite or something more complex than bacteria."

Kilani said he thinks Morgellons disease could be linked to areas of the U.S. with swamp land and wet areas because there has been a high prevalence of disease reports in the San Francisco Bay Area and other places with bodies of water and high levels of humidity, such as Texas and Florida.

"There is something in the environment," Kilani said. "It is probably linked to plants, yes. Maybe it lives on plants, and it adapted to the human

host."

Citovsky, however, provided a simple explanation for increased Morgellons disease reports in the three states.

"Who knows," he said. "Maybe people complain more there."

A scientific mystery

Kilani said scientists don't have the support to investigate Morgellons disease because they are short on funds and resources.

"Nobody thinks it's a disease, so that is part of the problem. Until they do, it's going to continue spreading. It's in households, so when one individual is infected, we find out that the rest of the

household is infected."

Though many people, even members of the medical science community, do not believe Morgellons is a legitimate disease, Kilani said he receives as many as 10 calls every day from people who identify themselves as having the symptoms. He refuses to accept the notion that it is a fabricated illness.

"No, this can't be," he said. "Not almost a half-million patients, no. I have met people from all walks of life: High-powered attorneys, [physicians](#), nurses, actors, actresses, athletes. They go nuts after awhile. They become socially rejected because of the way they look. The whole thing is just a dis-

aster."

Kilani said Kaiser Permanente is the first and only recipient of funding for Morgellons research from the [CDC](#), but he doesn't think the grant will be enough to help scientists determine if Morgellons disease is caused by bacteria, fungi or any other environmental factor.

"I'm not sure how far that will go because \$338,000 is a drop in the bucket," he said. "It'll be spent in a week. It's just not enough money. Whoever gets funding and can investigate this problem is going to make a huge contribution because there are lots of people with this illness."

CLAIMS QUIPS AND TIPS

Dale Washington, Attorney

Insurance Claim Survival Guide:

You know we all get caught off guard with a claim. A friend was hit by a flying tire this week in California. The truck that lost the tire is unknown. She reported the claim to the insurance broker who instructed her to 'get a repair estimate to see whether it exceeds the \$500 deductible.' This is an example of a (possibly well meaning) insurance broker screwin' up.

The broker is a salesman and a claim reporter. The insurance company does not have a claim. What difference you ask? The insured had Uninsured Motorist coverage. Since the flying tire hit her and not vice versa,

it should be classified as an Uninsured motorist claim so she has no deductible!!! Also, by reporting the claim, she is not criticized for not following her policy. POA members are reminded – the Broker or Agent merely sells and the company will quickly point out they are YOUR agent and not THEIRS when trouble starts. So remember, report claims to the Claims Department of the Carrier. If your Agent/broker will do that, then let them; if they start trying to play lawyer, claim adjuster, and all around know it all put them in their place so you don't end up paying for their self aggrandizement.

I am also litigating a case with Public Storage in California. The client does not have a copy of her signed rental agreement. Guess what? From my experience, Public Storage does not give tenants a signed copy of their contract unless it is requested. Instead, tenants trust the storage company to behave fairly. In today's day and age, such trust is usually misplaced.

So now what is Public Storage doing in the litigation? They are demurring because 'Plaintiff has not attached a copy of the signed Lease.' They also refuse to provide a copy until the demurrer is decided – a catch 22 which the defense firm is parlaying into a 4 month delay while I spin my wheels for nothing. POA members need to be smarter – When you sign a contract, read it because it most likely was not prepared with your interests in mind, and take a copy of exactly what you sign. Run your receiver more than your transmitter when in dicey situations. Date and sign your letters and pay attention to what you are admitting to. Do not send letters without keeping a copy.

Compost happens, however much of it can be avoided. POA members are equipped to fight them.





Just imagine how insurers would behave if we weren't here.

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KENTWOOD WATER COOLER BLAMED FOR HOUSE FIRE

How's this for adding insult to injury?

The first house to be rebuilt on the beach in Ocean Springs, Mississippi since Hurricane Katrina wiped the slate clean, burnt to the ground.

The Fire Marshall and other

investigators say the cause was a Kentwood (formerly Abita Springs) water cooler. Kentwood rented the cooler to the family for \$8 per month.

The home was rebuilt from the slab up and had all new wiring. Damages are ex-

pected to exceed \$800,000—\$1,000,000.

A similar situation occurred in New Orleans.

Be mindful of this brand when shopping for water coolers and let POA know if you know of others with similar experiences.



Justice for Sale continued from page 47

11 News: “They say your right to sue does not exist anymore. What do you think about that?”

Herrera: “That’s not right.”

11 News: “Why?”

Herrera: “They (treat) us like a piece of tool. We are not a tool. We are human beings.”

Linbeck told 11 News that on a personal basis, he supports the idea of reforming the current system of electing Supreme Court Justices. He said it is “unseemly” for justices to raise money personally for campaigns. However, he said he expects Texans For Lawsuit Reform and others to play by the rules as they are currently written until such reform comes along.

So, what was the Court’s reaction?

In a rare move, it has agreed to rehear the Case of Entergy vs. Summers. A spokesman says that likely will take place in September or October.

From there, the 11 News Defenders were told it could be more than a year before the Court issues its ruling.

Entergy declined comment on this story, citing the pending rehearing of the case.

After two years, Herrera could be eligible for other benefits if he qualifies.

The Texas Supreme Court justices declined comment, but some say any campaign contributions to the court give more of the appearance of impropriety than the real thing.

For example, the Court recently made a controversial ruling in favor of Perry Homes. But in that case, Chief Justice Willett, who received a substantial amount of campaign money from Perry, actually dissented against that judgment.

Texans for Lawsuit Reform

said that they've advocated for years to have supreme court justices appointed on merit.

They also deny any impropriety has occurred due to any campaign contributions they've made.

Finally, both Entergy and BP declined comment, but Citgo told us that they strive to provide a safe workplace and say they support Jose Herrera and his family through medical care and income benefits under the Texas Workers Compensation system as provided by law.

They also say they are fully cooperating with state and federal investigations into Herrera’s accident.