

# Parkland to hold mold workshop March 1



Parkland homeowners have expressed concern to the city about mold in their homes. (Scott Gelfand PA)



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**T**he city of Parkland has scheduled a workshop for March 1 to give homeowners the chance to discuss mold concerns with builders.

Vice Mayor Stacy Kagan said she asked WCI Communities Inc., CalAtlantic Group and Toll Brothers to meet with residents and outline the steps they're taking to address the problem. The meeting begins at 6 p.m. at Parkland City Hall.

"I just want everybody on the same page," Kagan said Tuesday. "I feel terrible that this is happening to our

residents. When you move into a new home, you want it to be beautiful, perfect.”

Kagan said it's unclear how many homes in Parkland may be affected. She has heard from more than 20 homeowners, though she said rumors may be leading some owners to mistakenly believe they have mold.

Scott Gelfand, an attorney for a Parkland mother suing WCI over mold issues, has said he has spoken with more than 100 Heron Bay residents complaining of mold in their homes over the past several years.

“In my opinion, any forum where the builders and residents can publicly discuss these issues is a good thing,” Gelfand said Tuesday in an email. “However, this workshop will only be productive ... if the builders recognize and acknowledge the correct, full-fledged steps needed to solve the underlying problems as opposed to simply offering Band-Aid fixes.”

The city has approved permits for fixes the builders hope will solve the problem. WCI's permit application details plans to install a dehumidifier, while CalAtlantic and Toll are using spray foam insulation.

Jon Rapaport, division president for WCI, said in January that the builder received a “couple of dozen complaints” but not all of those homeowners had mold.

Still, WCI made modifications in more than 100 Heron Bay homes at no charge to the owners, he said.

He attributed the mold to a design issue. WCI sealed openings and made changes to ventilation that allows moisture to escape attics, Rapaport said. In addition, WCI is offering the dehumidifiers to homeowners, he said.

Rapaport and CalAtlantic did not respond to phone messages Tuesday.

In a statement, Toll Brothers said, “We met with the city regarding the workshop and have provided the information they requested.”

Hundreds of homes are being built in Parkland, the last area left in Broward County for large-scale residential construction. Kagan said the city so far isn't aware of any other builders with possible mold issues.

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