

Mould, Slime Found at Listeria-Stricken Meat Plant

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OTTAWA - A top-to-bottom scrubbing after a deadly listeriosis outbreak apparently didn't fully cleanse a Maple Leaf Foods plant of mould, slime and meat debris, newly released documents show.

Inspectors found a troubling lack of hygiene at the company's Toronto facility just weeks after it reopened last year from a temporary shutdown for cleaning, according to inspection reports.

News That Stunned Us

A top-to-bottom scrubbing after a deadly listeriosis outbreak apparently didn't fully cleanse a Maple Leaf Foods plant of mould, slime and meat debris, newly released documents show. Inspectors found a troubling lack of hygiene at the company's Toronto facility just weeks after it reopened last year from a temporary shutdown for cleaning, according to inspection reports. During a checkup less than a month later, Canadian Food Inspection Agency staff found mould on the walls and floor, slime underneath a meat-trimming table, leftover meat on wheeled container bins and rusty equipment. (Note: Please disable your pop-up blocker)



The Canadian Press/File

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The Canadian Press/File

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On Friday Edward Ates was found guilty of murder. The jury rejected his argument that he was too fat to have clambered up a flight of stairs in order to shoot his son-in-law.

AP Photo/Courtesy of Trenton Prosecutor Office

Emergency workers transport a victim from a shooting in downtown Orlando on Friday, Nov. 6, 2009, in Orlando, Fla. Police are searching for a gunman who injured at least eight people at a downtown Orlando, Fla., office building. Orange County Sheriff's Spokesman Jim Solomons says his department is backing up Orlando police and they're still looking for an armed man wearing a light blue polo shirt and jeans.

AP Photo/Orlando Sentinel, Joe Burbank

Jason Rodriguez is seen in this undated photo provided by the Orlando Police Department Friday Nov. 6, 2009. Rodriguez is considered the suspect in the shooting at an Orlando Office Building Friday.

AP Photo/Orlando Police Dept.

This video frame grab image taken from WFTV television shows the Legions Place office building in downtown Orlando, Fla. where a gunman has opened fire wounding several people, according to police., Friday Nov. 6, 2009. Orange County Sheriff's Spokesman Jim Solomons says his department is backing up Orlando police and they're still looking for an armed man wearing a light blue polo shirt and jeans.

AP Photo/WFTV

This video frame grab image taken from WFTV television shows police escorting people to safety at the scene near the Legions Place office building in downtown Orlando, Fla. where a gunman has opened fire wounding several people, according to police., Friday Nov. 6, 2009.

AP Photo/WFTV

A frame grab from a security video provided by CNN shows Maj. Nadal Malik Hasan in a convenience store in Killeen, Texas early Thursday morning, Nov. 5, 2009. Hasan was identified by authorities as the man who shot and killed people at Fort Hood, Texas, in the worst mass shooting ever at a military base in the United States.

AP Photo/CNN

This undated image taken from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences Fall 2007 newsletter shows Nidal Malik Hasan. Maj. Hasan an Army psychiatrist set to be shipped overseas opened fire Thursday Nov. 5, 2009 at the Fort Hood Army post, authorities said, a rampage that killed 13 people and left 30 wounded in the worst mass shooting ever at a military base in the United States.

AP Photo/ Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences

In this image made from Associated Press Television video, police respond at the scene at the U.S. Army base in Fort Hood Texas where a soldier opened fire, unleashing a stream of gunfire that left at least 13 people dead and at least 30 wounded.

AP Photo/APTN

In this image made from Associated Press Television video, emergency personnel take a wounded person on a stretcher to an awaiting ambulance at the scene at the U.S. Army base in Fort Hood Texas where a soldier opened fire, unleashing a stream of gunfire that left at least 13 people dead and at least 30 wounded.

AP Photo/APTN

Soldiers from the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment storm the grounds of the Soldier Readiness Center in a show of force as they help in the apprehension of Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan Thursday Nov. 5, 2009. Hasan, a psychiatrist set to be shipped overseas opened fire at the Fort Hood Army post Thursday, authorities said, a rampage that killed 13 people and left 30 wounded in the worst mass shooting ever at a military base in the United States.

AP Photo/David Morris, Killeen Daily Herald

Maple Leaf says inspectors were looking more carefully at the plant after the listeriosis crisis, so naturally they found more problems.

And the company's chief food-safety officer, Dr. Randy Huffman, said Maple Leaf put in place more than 200 new standard operating procedures after the listeriosis outbreak but it took workers time to learn them. He said that through that learning process the company has continuously improved its approach to food safety.

Huffman said there was never any reason to be worried about the safety of the food produced at the plant.

The head of the federal food inspectors union said, however, that some of what the inspectors reported seeing at the time were "things that people should be concerned about."

Maple Leaf closed its Bartor Road deli-meat plant for nearly a month last year after its products tested positive for a bacteria called *Listeria monocytogenes*. Twenty-two people died and many more fell ill after eating tainted meat from the plant.