

<<Back



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## PCA plant conditions 'disturbing'

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ALBANY, GA (WALB) - Attorneys for victims in the country's largest Salmonella outbreak went inside the Blakely plant at the center of that outbreak and what they found is disturbing.

Inspectors found bugs and tools in the product and rodents in the production area. They also found missing filters on the roof, leaks, and waste product buildup on machines. WALB News Ten has exclusive pictures of what the attorney's forensic photographer found.

Pictures taken Thursday inside the Blakely Peanut Corporation of America plant, show disturbing images, a screwdriver left inside a machine where peanuts were stored. A small piece of wire inside the hopper with peanuts matching wire found inside the plant's maintenance area, and that's not all.

"When he pulled the bottom release door of the hopper and let some of the peanut product down there was a wasp and a beetle that was alive," said George Pearl, Alps Evidence & Photo President.

"A lot of grease, a lot of oil, a lot of peanut waste that's trapped in pieces of equipment," said Roy Costa, a former Health Inspector.

The Plainview, Texas plant was worse with dead mice on the floor. Attorney Bill Marler and his team of six inspectors spent several hours looking the plant over from the leaks in the roof to the gaps in the bay doors.

"Big wide spaces between the door and the wall to allow any kind of bug or rodent to come in," said Pearl.

The facility ceased operations in January and it's been four weeks since anyone's been inside the plant, but investigators say the build up they found, goes back much further.

"What we're seeing is a systemic or systematic cleaning problem there," said Costa.

Bill Marler says ConAgra's plant in Sylvester was worse than Blakely. He also said companies who purchased product from PCA will likely never recoup their losses. Victims stand to collect as much as 12 million in insurance.

"In my opinion that's not enough money to compensate all 700," said Marler.

He hopes these cases will raise a red flag that companies have to do a better job of paying attention to simple cleanliness. An attorney for PCA monitoring the visit refused to comment.

Attorney Bill Marler said he's also awaiting information from federal authorities who went through the plant in February.

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