

# Little or No Air Conditioning at D.C. Jail Annex

## SE Correctional Treatment Facility Houses 1,000 Medium-Security Prisoners

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The city's medium-security correctional facility has been plagued by poor and non-functioning air conditioning since the beginning of the summer, and at one point inmates were moved from one unit to another because of rising temperature and humidity, a manager there said.

Walter Fulton, facility program manager at the Correctional Treatment Facility at 19th and E streets SE said temperatures in the affected buildings have registered as high as 80 degrees when daily measurements are taken about 10:30 a.m.

Managed by Corrections Corp. of America, the facility is an annex of the D.C. jail and houses more than 1,000 people, including inmates and pretrial detainees.

Inmates have complained of the heat, and at least one has contacted legal services about broken water fountains in some areas of the facility, said Philip Fornaci, executive director of D.C. Prisoners' Legal Services Project, an advocacy group. Our Place D.C., an organization that aids female prisoners with their reentry to society after release, also has received calls, said April Giancola, the group's director of legal services. She added that inmates rarely call with complaints unless conditions are severe.

Two of four compressors at the facility are broken, Fulton said, and three compressors must be working to restore air conditioning to all buildings. There are some floor fans in common areas, "but that doesn't really reach into the cells," Fulton said.

It is not a lockdown facility, so most inmates do not spend all day in their cells, and air conditioning has been functioning all summer in the units where some inmates are segregated from the general prison

population, he added. The supervising doctor could not be reached for comment, but a nurse at the facility said she was not aware of heat-related medical problems.

Building D, which houses about 335 inmates, remains without air conditioning, according to an e-mail from Fulton, and by 10:30 a.m. yesterday, the temperature was 75 degrees.

On June 13, inmates were evacuated from one unit of the C building and reassigned to another because of the temperature and humidity, according to the e-mail. Air conditioning in the A building was restored last week after it had been functioning only partly since the beginning of the summer, he said.

"It doesn't surprise me," said D.C. Council member Phil Men-

delson (D-At Large), chairman of the Judiciary Committee. "There have been problems with heating and ventilation in those buildings for years," he said of the Correctional Treatment Facility and the D.C. jail. "We're having consecutive 90-degree days, and the idea of being locked up . . . with no air conditioning is unbearable," Mendelson said.

Air conditioning failure is just one piece of a larger facilities issue at those buildings, which have had problems with broken elevators and windows that have become opaque over time, according to Mendelson. The D.C. jail has not experienced air conditioning failure this summer, according to a facilities staff member there, although Fornaci of D.C. Prisoners' Legal Services Project cited past problems of tempera-

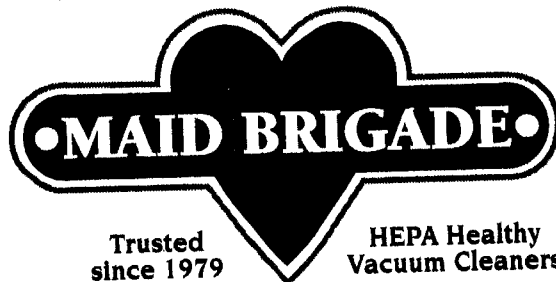
ture extremes there during winter and summer.

Maintenance managers at the Correctional Treatment Facility budgeted \$140,000 for air conditioning repairs this year but added \$16,000 when they discovered the air conditioning units had more extensive damage than they had thought, including corroded and leaking water jackets, Fulton said. It took six weeks for the parts to be fabricated and shipped.

York Heating and Air Conditioning, which services the units along with Siemens Building Technologies, came yesterday to work on the air conditioning and is coming again today, Fulton said, but he added that he was not certain when the facility's system would be fully repaired.

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