

Mold damage claims increase dramatically

AUSTIN (AP) — Mold. It's creepy, ugly and scaring the heck out of some people who find it in their homes.

And it's proving downright unhealthy for the Texas property insurance market.

Despite a proposal by state regulators last week to limit mold damage coverage for homes, two of the state's largest property insurance providers, Farmers Insurance Group and State Farm Insurance, say they won't be writing any new policies in Texas. Together, they hold more than 50 percent of the homeowner's insurance market in Texas.

Farmers already had stopped writing new policies. State Farm, claiming mounting financial losses because of mold and other claims, announced its decision the day state regulators released their plan aimed at both preventing big rate hikes and protecting insurers.

Texas Insurance Commissioner Jose Montemayor said he was "terribly disappointed" by State Farm's decision.

"I had hoped for more restraint. There are other options available to them," he said.

The companies don't think so.

Insurers say they're worried about their business as mold damage claims and lawsuits increase.

State Farm Senior Vice President Ron Dodd said the company has five times as many mold claims this year as it did in 2000.

Underwriting losses have hit \$504 million this year and the company has incurred \$1.77 in claims losses and expenses for every dollar collected in premiums, he said. Much of the loss is related to mold claims.

State Farm said it plans to raise rates for cur-

rent policy Texas holders by an average of 14.5 percent. The moratorium on new policies announced last week does not affect current policyholders.

In June, a Travis County District Court jury awarded a Dripping Springs family \$32 million after finding that a subsidiary of Farmers Insurance Group mishandled the family's homeowner's claim for black mold damage.

The jury said the insurer committed fraud and failed to adequately and swiftly cover repairs for a

"Our costs for mold-related claims are skyrocketing."

— Ron Dodd
State Farm senior vice president

water leak, allowing the toxic mold stachybotrys to overrun the 22-room mansion and damage the family's health.

Farmers has asked Montemayor to let the company drop mold coverage from homeowners policies in Texas.

"Our costs for mold-related claims are skyrocketing," Dodd said. "To continue would jeopardize the financial condition" of the company, which has about 1.7 million policies, he said.

Still, regulators saw the latest moratorium as unnecessary.

"This is an obvious effort to pressure the commissioner," said Public Insurance Counsel Rod Bordelon, the state consumer advocate for insurance.

DEFENSE

Continued from Page 7

behind OSU's line of scrimmage, for a total of 44 yards.

Perhaps the most telling statistic is in the third-down conversion category. A&M did not allow a third-down conversion for the first 33:16 of the game.

And after that one, it would be more than 20 minutes later, during the Cowboys' final drive.

Want more?

OSU, a team that averages 105 yards per game, was held to 64 yards by the Aggies. Likewise, the Cowboy aerial attack earned just 135 yards. Compare that to the 215.5 they averaged in their first two con-

tests, and you see just how stout the A&M defense was.

"I've been here a long time and that was one of the best performances we've had," said senior linebacker Christian Rodriguez, who has played in 35 games as an Aggie. "I think this was the beginning of what is going to happen the rest of the season."



December Graduates The Official Texas A&M Graduation Announcements

<http://graduation.tamu.edu>

Payment for priority orders must be received by October 1!

Attention All New Members of NSCS

National Society of Collegiate Scholars

Induction Convocation Ceremony

Will take place

Monday, September 24, 2001 at 6:00 PM

In Rudder Auditorium

Check in begins at 5:30 PM

For more information, contact us at:

nscs_tamu@yahoo.com

Nothing in life is FREE

Unless you're a senior

Class of 2002 Don't miss your chance to be in the 2002 Aggieland yearbook. Get your FREE Senior picture taken at AR Photography. No appointment needed. Visit AR Photography at 1410 Texas Ave. South or call 693-8183. Open M-F 9-12, 1:30-4.

AGGIELAND

Texas A&M University Yearbook • 100 Years of Excellence

(979) 845-2682
aggieland.tamu.edu

FALL 2001 BUSINESS CAREER FAIR



TUESDAY

- ABB, Inc.
- AIM Funds
- Bear, Stearns & Co. Inc.
- California Highway Patrol
- Central Intelligence Agency
- Cintas
- CMS Energy Panhandle - Pipe Line Companies
- Consolidated Graphics
- Deloitte & Touche
- Deloitte Consulting
- Donovan and Watkins
- Dynegy Inc.
- Enron Corp.
- Equiva Services
- Ernst & Young
- Federal Reserve Bank
- FedEx Services
- Ferguson Enterprises, Inc.
- Foley's
- General Mills, Inc.
- Grainger
- Grant Thornton LLP
- Guaranty Bank
- H&R Block Financial Advisors, Inc.
- Halliburton Company
- Harley-Davidson, Inc.
- H-E-B Grocery Company
- Hewitt Associates
- Homecomings Financial
- A GMAC Company
- Hope Lumber & Supply Company
- KPMG, LLP
- Kurt Salmon Associates
- Luby's, Inc.
- Mervyn's California
- Motorola, Inc.
- National Instruments
- Neiman Marcus
- Northwestern Mutual Financial Network
- Office Depot
- Pannell Kerr Forster of Texas, P.C.
- Pappas Restaurants
- Peterson Consulting
- PricewaterhouseCoopers
- Randalls/Tom Thumb Food Markets
- Ryan & Company
- SBC Communications Inc.
- Sears, Roebuck and Company
- Shell Oil Company
- Southwest Bank of Texas
- Sybron Dental Specialties
- Tactica Technology Group
- Texas Instruments
- The Boeing Company
- The Expo Group
- TXU
- UCS
- USAA
- VarTee Telecom
- Walgreens
- Zachry Construction Company

WEDNESDAY

- Alltel
- American National
- Army & Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES)
- Arthur Andersen
- Bank One Corporation
- Bed Bath & Beyond
- Bridgestone/Firestone
- Cap Gemini Ernst & Young
- Cintas
- Compass International, Inc.
- Conoco Inc.
- Defense Finance and Accounting Service
- Dewalt / Black and Decker
- DHL Worldwide Express
- Dynegy Inc.
- EnForm Technology LLC
- Enterprise Rent-A-Car
- Equiva Services
- Ferguson Enterprises, Inc.
- Foley's
- Ford Motor Company
- GE Capital Services
- General Accounting Office
- Guaranty Bank
- H&R Block Financial Advisors, Inc.
- Halliburton Company
- H-E-B Grocery Company
- Hope Lumber & Supply Company
- IBM Corporation
- Internal Revenue Service
- J.D. Edwards & Company
- JC Penney
- Kroger Co.
- Life Investors
- Marathon Oil
- Maxim Healthcare Services
- McKesson Supply Solutions
- McLane Company, Inc.
- National Instruments
- Northwestern Mutual Financial Network
- Office Depot
- Pannell Kerr Forster of Texas, P.C.
- Pepsi Bottling Group
- Randalls/Tom Thumb Food Markets
- Reliant Energy
- Royce Homes, L.P.
- Sears, Roebuck and Company
- Sewell Automotive Companies
- Sherwin-Williams
- Smith & Associates
- Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts
- Toys R Us
- TXU
- UCS
- United States Gypsum Co.
- USAA
- Walgreens
- Wal-mart Stores Inc.
- Wells Fargo Financial Acceptance
- Zale Corporation

THURSDAY

- Amerada Hess Corporation
- American Express Financial Advisors, Inc.
- Automatic Data Processing (ADP)
- BMC Software
- BP Corporation
- Bureau of the Census
- Calpine Energy Services
- Citigroup Corporate & Investment Bank
- Clarke American Checks
- Compaq Computer Corporation
- Defense Finance and Accounting Service
- Dell Computer Corp.
- Duke Energy
- E & J Gallo Winery
- Easley, Endres, Parkhill & Brackendorff, P.C.
- Enterprise Rent-A-Car
- First Avantis Securities
- General Accounting Office
- Harold's Stores, Inc.
- IKEA
- JPMorgan Chase-Texas
- KPMG Consulting
- Mann Frankfort Stein & Lipp
- McLane Company, Inc.
- Medical Contracting Services
- NASA Johnson Space Center
- Royce Homes, L.P.
- Sewell Automotive Companies
- Smith & Associates
- SourceNet Solutions
- Standard & Poor's
- Staples
- State Farm Insurance
- State of California Franchise Tax Board
- Target Stores
- U.S. DOL/Bureau of Labor Statistics
- United States Gypsum Co.
- United States Marine Corps
- VHA
- Wal-mart Stores Inc.
- Wave Tec Pools
- Wells Fargo Financial

Receptions

7 - 9 pm

24th - Cafe Eccel

25th - George Bush Presidential Library

26th - Briarcrest Country Club

SEPTEMBER 25-27

wehner.tamu.edu/bsc