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GSA Directs Contractor to Make Repairs to Buffalo Courthouse

NEW YORK, N.Y. – The U.S. General Services Administration has identified the cause of the moisture problem at Buffalo's new U.S. courthouse and has directed the general contractor to take all necessary actions to remedy the construction problem that has caused condensation in the perimeter ellipse wall of the building.

"After completion of this work, GSA, the courts, U.S. Marshals Service, other tenants, and people of Buffalo will have the use and service of a beautiful new courthouse for many years to come," said GSA Regional Administrator Denise L. Pease.

Since the problem was first discovered in January, GSA and its design and construction contractors have sought the advice of building enclosure experts to help identify the cause of the condensation. After careful analysis and testing it has been determined that large and unsealed gaps at the top and bottom of the drywall barrier between the exterior and interior wall allowed moisture laden air to enter the wall cavity at the top, exit at the bottom, and condense and be stored in the form of ice on the precast exterior wall during the weeks of below freezing temperatures. When the weather turned warmer, the ice on the exterior wall melted and the resulting liquid seeped out of the wall cavity at the windows and at the bottom of the wall assembly.

This condition can be permanently resolved by sealing the top and bottom of the drywall to create the necessary air barrier. The repairs include the removal and replacement of all materials that were damaged because of the condensation.

The contractor is being asked to submit a schedule that will identify the impact this repair will have on the completion of the project. However, the government's estimate is that the project should achieve substantial completion this fall.

The contractor has been directed to correct the ellipse wall condensation problem at no additional cost to taxpayers.

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