

Odor In The Court (from the Dayton Daily News, March 3, 2005)

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TROY- Environmental consultants wearing protective gear made their way Tuesday through tunnels around the 1880s Miami County Courthouse in search of the cause of a mystery odor.

Bill Treasure and Bruce Stege of Turn-Key Environmental Consultants Inc. of Troy planned to ship overnight to a lab in Phoenix air samples and other material collected.

“We are trying to eliminate as much as we are trying to find,” Treasure said of a series of tests they were hired Tuesday by the county commissioners to conduct. A report on findings and recommendations should be to commissioners in a couple of weeks, he said.

The commission agreed to pay up to \$8,200 for the investigation into mystery odors in the Courthouse and Safety Building next door. The commissioners said they weren't aware of the odors – described as smelling like sewage or rotten eggs – until Jan. 27, though employees said they'd noticed the odors off and on for much longer.

Don Beckman, county facilities director, said workers think the smell in the Safety

Building, built in the 1970s, was caused by a plumbing problem – now corrected – between the first and second floor bathrooms.

One of the tunnels built as part of the heating and cooling system for the Courthouse, which was connected to a power plant across the street, has been identified as the probable source of the Courthouse smell. What is causing the smell, though, hasn't been pinpointed.

A system of tiles and tubes in the Courthouse walls that circulated air likely providing outlets for the smell, Beckman and the consultants said. Many of the outlets, but not all, have been covered over the years.

Treasure said the consultants would gather air samples and test for bacteria and fungi in the Courthouse for most of the day Tuesday. A few tests also were planned for the Safety Building to confirm the problem there was solved.