

■ CIVITAS BUILDING

# 'Contractor liable for rain damage'

*Waterproofing removed, resulting in 8th floor being affected; carpet, ceiling ruined*

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THE Department of Health will hold a contractor responsible for damages caused by the weekend rains to offices at the Civitas building.

The department said the contractor removed all the waterproofing without informing workers to clear the floor of staff and equipment.

Saturday's heavy rains affected the entire eighth floor of the controversial building, severely damaging the ceiling and carpet.

Spokesperson Popo Maja said officials working in the affected area had been evacuated to other floors to allow the contractor to make swift repairs before more rains lead to further extensive damage.

Photos of the aftermath show the debris of wet ceiling material that fell on office furniture, telephones and computers.

Maja said: "This is unacceptable. It will take about three months to complete the waterproofing of that roof. The contractor has been requested to work throughout the festive season."

Only the eighth floor has been affected. Maja said the department was relieved that there were no electrical damage.

"The eighth floor has been decommissioned until all work has been completed. There is enough space to accommodate affected staff in the building. Technically speaking, it is not the flooding but leakage from the concrete roof that has not been properly waterproofed," Maja added.

Staff, led by the Public Servants Association and the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union, have been reporting for duty, but refusing to enter the building on claims that it was dilapidated.

Public Servants Association chairperson in the Department of Health, Peter Moloi, said: "This goes to show just how mad things are at this building. That's why a lot of our members are still refusing to enter for work.

"Some areas in the building still have a prohibition notice from an inspector from the office of the inspector-general.

Health Minister Dr Aaron Motsoaledi and his Public Works counterpart Thulas Nxesi both admitted that the building has been poorly maintained and workers who had protested outside the for months raised legitimate grievances. However, they said the department had been renovating the building and sending staff home early to allow for swift refurbishments.