

## Bumps in the Night!!!!

August 2014 Issue

### Paranormal "U"

#### Normal Home False Positives

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As a paranormal investigative team, we have received just about everything in the way of claims. There are so many normal noises a house makes and most households do not shut off all appliances and electronics in their homes and simply sit in silence to hear these normal home sounds. Some sounds can sound quite scary when the homeowner is not aware of what made the sound and will assume it was paranormal in nature. Other things homeowners need to be aware of are the side effects of being exposed to mold, mildew, carbon monoxide, radon, animal feces, and insomnia. Just to name a few. Many side effects can make a homeowner feel as if they are having a paranormal experience.

Since there are too many possibilities to cover in once article, the first thing I would suggest to someone is to be aware of your surroundings. Do you have a lot of wildlife in the area? Do you have trees close to the house? Have you checked your home for mold, mildew, or carbon monoxide? Some common things to consider are:

**Animals in the house** - Animals can make many different noises such as scratching, thumps, bangs, etc. When the sound travels through the house it isn't always obvious where it is coming from and can sound quite scary. Checking for chewing marks, nesting material and feces within the house can rule out it being an animal as the source of your noises.

**Water Hammer** - Water hammer is a normal plumbing sound in the home. When the water within the pipe is suddenly forced to stop or change direction, a loud bang can be heard. Along with water hammer, there are the water pipes themselves. If the pipes are not properly secured, they can bang against each other or vibrate when water runs through.

**Cold drafts** - Many things can cause cold drafts and may not necessarily be paranormal. Homeowners should check that all windows and doors are shut properly and have a tight seal. Sometimes even outlets can allow air to come through and those need to be insulated. A laser thermometer can be used to check for air leaks.

**Trees** - Walk around the house and make sure that there are no tree limbs or bushes near the house. This can cause tapping noises, scratching, thumping, etc. especially when storms blow through. It is a good idea to have them trimmed properly.

**Other house pops and odd noises** – As the seasons change and/or going from day to night, the house itself will make noises as the outside temperature changes. Vinyl siding will make loud noises as it expands and contracts with the temperature changes. One day try sitting in your house, with everything turned off, in the morning and as the day gets warmer, listen to the house. You might be amazed at what you hear.

**Carbon Monoxide** - Carbon Monoxide (CO) is completely odorless! We always recommend that every homeowner have a Carbon Monoxide detector. CO poisoning symptoms can be confused with feelings of something paranormal such as headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, and confusion. More serious symptoms are vomiting, chest pain, loss of consciousness, and death. If you are feeling any of the above, checking for this gas should be your first priority!

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**Molds and Mildew** - Molds and mildew are fungi that grow in moist environments. When this breeds indoors this can be deadly. Just like with odorless gases, you may not always know you have a problem unless it is obvious and showing. Mold and mildew can trigger allergic reactions and asthma attacks in many people. Some symptoms include flu-like symptoms, chronic fatigue syndrome, upper respiratory infections, sore throat, nosebleeds, memory issues, migraines, and dizziness. Some, not all, of the effects of mold and mildew are similar to claims of feeling paranormal activity.

**Gas Leaks** - It is always a good idea to check connections to any appliances that require gas hook up. For instance, gas dryers, stoves, furnaces, and hot water heaters. If it is a significant leak the homeowner will probably smell it. If it is a slight leak, the homeowner may not. If it is low level exposure, headaches can occur along with breathlessness. Some symptoms are similar to other illnesses such as allergies. It is always a good idea to regularly check these connections. High level or prolonged exposure can result in flu-like symptoms, headaches, fatigue, dizziness, and nausea. Homeowners can become unusually irritable and have issues with physical coordination. In severe situations, the homeowner can lose consciousness and can cause death.

**Insomnia** - The lack of sleep seriously effects the body in negative ways. It can impact mood, quality of life, physical development, growth and the healing process. Some other effects are inability to concentrate, fatigue, irritability, injury/accidents (falling, tripping), and often sick. Again, some of these symptoms are similar to claims of feeling something paranormal.

**Sleep Disorders** - There are many different types of sleep disorders. There are many claims of feeling as though the homeowner is being held down by something unknown. We have also had claims of having other paranormal activity when coming out of a sleep. Sometimes its voices and other times shadow people. While we sleep, our brain dispenses a natural anesthetic that keeps us fairly still when we sleep. When a person is suddenly woken, that anesthetic is still wearing off; therefore making the person feel as if they can't move and are being held down. After a few seconds, all should be well and they can move. It's hard to say if someone is having paranormal experiences versus it being a sleep disorder. If a sleep disorder is suspected, it's highly recommended that a sleep study be arranged by a medical doctor. Also, if the person is having issues every single night a sleep study should definitely be arranged. If it is once in a while, everything else such as animals, gases, molds, and mildew should be ruled out before leaning towards paranormal activity.