

Jack Daniel's-Fed Whiskey Fungus Consumes Tennessee Town

Whiskey fungus, a black-to-gray, crusty – or sometimes velvety – mycelium, has been reported near Kentucky bourbon distilleries, Canadian whiskey makers, and Caribbean rum manufacturers. The fungus can be a real problem in the South because it can survive hot Southern summers thanks to its ability to resist temperature changes and cling to almost any surface. And although Tennessee-based Jack Daniel's complied with local, state, and federal regulations regarding fungus control, local woman Christi Long has sued the company over fungus fueled by barrelhouses – even as JD planned to build seven more warehouses in its rural home county to age whiskey, potentially generating up to \$1 million in tax revenue.

The *New York Times* reports that whiskey fungus has infested the copper roof of a circa-1900 mansion owned by Long. The mansion's exterior walls have influenced crusting on nearby magnolia trees and also infested a rock garden and metal gate. Nearby resident Tracy Ferry also complained about fungus growth in the family's home and vehicle.

So last week, a judge ruled that Jack Daniel's must obtain permits before using barrelhouses near Long's mansion. Despite the company's compliance with regulations, the impact of whiskey fungus on nearby residents raises concerns about the spirits industry's expansion. Distilling industry growth has generally led to more cases of whiskey fungus affecting residential areas near distillers' locations. Although it complies with regulations, the fungus can cause property

damage and cling to almost any surface.

Other distillers are surely watching the case. Expansion in the distilling industry should be balanced with its effects on nearby residents and measures must be taken to mitigate whiskey fungus outbreaks, or an entirely new genre of high-dollar litigation might become a fixture in civil courts for years to come.

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/business-news/jack-daniels-fed-whiskey-fungus-consumes-tennessee-town/446747>