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### **Reports state West Jordan Sugar Factory Playhouse building 'unsafe'**

(West Jordan, UT) – After a March 12 report from BHB Engineers found major structural deficiencies, including unreinforced masonry walls, an inadequately reinforced ceiling and “high life safety hazards,” the City of West Jordan Building Official had no choice but to close the doors of the Sugar Factory Playhouse, 8201 S. 2200 West. A separate report from the Utah Risk Management Association received March 16 contained similar findings.

“We have had four separate inspections to determine building safety,” said West Jordan Mayor Melissa Johnson. “Only the air quality study came back compliant. Everything else showed the buildings pose a significant public safety risk.”

The playhouse is one of three buildings which were once part of a sugar beet processing facility dating back to 1916. The West Jordan Arts Council has used the east building for its performances since 2004. Unfortunately, the building closure coincides with the Arts Council’s production of “See How They Run,” set to open March 18. Unless the City Council votes to overturn the Building Official’s recommendation, the production will need to be relocated. The mayor is looking into alternative locations.

In the City Council’s January strategic planning meeting, public safety was listed as the No. 1 priority.

“Public safety is more than the number of patrol officers and fire response time,” said Johnson. “It also includes making sure public facilities meet safety standards. The timing is terrible for the theater, but we can’t ignore the threat to public safety.”

Over the past seven years, a volunteer task force has been looking at ways to preserve this slice of West Jordan history, including transforming the buildings into a performing arts complex.

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