

Mold, Moisture, & Your Home

Mold Basics:

- ❑ The key to mold control is moisture control.
- ❑ If mold is a problem in your home, you should clean up the mold promptly and fix the water problem.
- ❑ It is important to dry water-damaged areas and items within 24-48 hours to prevent mold growth.

Why is mold growing in my home?

Molds are part of the natural environment and serve a purpose outdoors. However, indoors, mold growth should be avoided. Molds reproduce by means of tiny spores and are capable of growing indoors when mold spores land on surfaces that are wet. Of the many types of molds, none will grow without water or moisture.

Can mold cause health problems?

Molds have the potential to cause health problems. Molds produce allergens (substances that can cause allergic reactions), irritants, and in some cases, potentially toxic substances (mycotoxins). Allergic reactions to mold are common, and may include sneezing, runny nose, red eyes, and skin rash. Research on the topic is ongoing and for more detailed information it is advisable to consult a physician.

How do I get rid of, or prevent mold from growing indoors?

Mold spores will not grow if moisture is not present. Indoor mold growth can be prevented or controlled by controlling moisture indoors. Here are some tips that will help prevent and control moisture and mold:

- ❑ Clean up all water leaks or spills quickly. If wet or damp materials or areas are dried within 24-48 hours after the leak or spill, it significantly decreases the likelihood that mold will grow.
- ❑ Clean and repair roof gutters regularly.
- ❑ Make certain that the ground slopes away from the building foundation, so that water does not enter or collect around the foundation.
- ❑ Keep air conditioning drip pans clean and the drain lines unobstructed and flowing properly.
- ❑ Keep indoor humidity low.
- ❑ If you see condensation or moisture collecting on windows, walls or pipes, dry the wet surface and reduce the moisture/water source. Condensation can be a sign of high humidity.
- ❑ Vent appliances that produce moisture, such as clothes dryers, stoves, and kerosene heaters to the outside where possible.
- ❑ Use air conditioners and/or de-humidifiers when needed.
- ❑ Run the bathroom fan or open the window when showering. Use exhaust fans or open windows whenever cooking, running the dishwasher or dishwashing, etc.
- ❑ Increase ventilation or air movement by opening doors and/or windows, when practical. Use fans as needed.
- ❑ Cover cold surfaces, such as cold water pipes, with insulation.
- ❑ Increase air temperature.

Additional Resources

- ❑ EPA's [Mold Resources page](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/moldresources.html) (http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/moldresources.html)
- ❑ The EPA publication, [Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/mold_remediation.html) (http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/mold_remediation.html)
- ❑ Other Indoor Air Quality [Publications and Resources](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs) – (http://www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs)