



SafetyAlert

We're Serious About Safety

Keys to a Mold-Free Workplace

Mold is part of the natural environment and can be found everywhere, indoors and outdoors. Mold is not usually a problem unless it begins growing indoors. The best way to control mold growth is to control moisture. Mold can have a big impact on indoor air quality.

How does mold grow?

All mold needs water to grow. Mold can grow almost anywhere there is water damage, high humidity, or dampness. Most often mold is confined to areas near the source of water. Removing the source of moisture - such as through repairs or dehumidification - is critical to preventing mold growth.

The key to preventing mold is to prevent moisture sources.

How should a building be evaluated for mold growth?

Check building materials and spaces for visible mold and signs of moisture damage indicating a history of water leaks, high humidity levels, and/or condensation including HVAC systems. Any occupant complaints or reported health problems should be noted as well as any musty or moldy odors. Components of the building's ventilation system should also be inspected. A moisture meter is often helpful in identifying wet or damp building materials. Potential air pathways from the mold source should also be understood to determine their impact on the building and its occupants.

When is sampling necessary in a building evaluation?

Sampling may not always be necessary. If visible mold is present, then it should be removed, regardless of what mold species are present and whether samples are taken. In specific instances, such as cases where health concerns are an issue, or the source(s) of contamination is unclear, sampling may be considered as part of a building evaluation.

How should mold be cleaned?

Mold should be cleaned as soon as it appears. Persons cleaning mold should be free of symptoms and allergies. Small areas of mold should be cleaned using a detergent/soapy solution or an appropriate household cleaner. Gloves should be worn during cleaning. The cleaned area should then be thoroughly dried. Dispose of any sponges or rags used to clean mold. If the mold returns quickly or spreads, it may indicate an underlying problem such as a leak. Any underlying water problems must be fixed to successfully eliminate mold problems. If mold contamination is extensive, a professional abatement company may need to be consulted.



Mold Prevention Checklist

- Is there condensation or moisture collecting on floors, windows, walls, or pipes?
- Have ceiling tiles been inspected for signs of moisture?
- Have cold surfaces, such as water pipes, been covered with insulation?
- Have the air-handling units been inspected and tested?
- Is the indoor humidity level between 30-60%?
- Are dehumidifiers working properly?
- Have all air filters been inspected and cleaned?
- Are all floors and walls washed and cleaned on a regular basis with mild detergents?
- Are all rugs inspected for moisture and mold and cleaned regularly?
- Are high-moisture areas such as bathroom, kitchen, and laundry rooms vented properly to reduce moisture build-up?

Reference:

<https://www.epa.gov/mold>



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