

Flooding and Mold

Drying and fixing water damage within the first 24-48 hours is essential in reducing mold growth potential. The key to fighting mold is fixing the water damage and reducing moisture in the home. Mold needs moisture, food, and the right temperature conditions to grow.

Here are a few steps you can take to reduce the chances of mold growth

- ☛ Once the water is removed, dry all surfaces, including carpets, walls, ceilings. Clean all water damaged surfaces with a strong detergent and water mix.
- ☛ Discard as much water damaged items as possible.
- ☛ Place a dehumidifier in the effected room to remove the moisture from the air. Make sure to drain the dehumidifier collection pan.
- ☛ If visible mold growth occurs, don't panic. Clean it with a strong detergent and water mix. If the colonies continue to grow, there is still a water problem. Find the problem and fix it.
- ☛ Don't be concerned about testing for mold to find out if it is "toxic". If visible mold is found, treat it as a health hazard.
- ☛ Wear personal protective equipment if mold growth is severe or you are concerned about the health risks. Rubber gloves, N-95 respirator, and goggles without air holes are the best line of defense and can be purchased inexpensively at hardware stores.
- ☛ If the room is carpeted, consider having the carpet professionally cleaned to remove the mold.
- ☛ Check for structural damage. Structural damage may allow more water infiltration at a later date, increasing the chances of mold growth.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has created a document regarding mold and mold cleanup. "A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture, and Your Home" can be found at the EPA's website

<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/moldguide.html>

Taking a little time now to fix a problem you may not be able to see can save you a lot of time, money, and heartache down the road.