



MOLD IN YOUR HOME

Do you have questions about mold? Are you concerned about the possible health affects related to exposure to mold? This document is intended to help answer your basic questions about mold. This document also provides information about other resources that are available.

What is mold?

Mold is a fungus that grows everywhere, both in nature and in the home. Molds produce spores that are very small and spread easily. In nature, molds are beneficial as they help to break down dead materials. Molds convert leaf matter into rich organic matter for fertile soil formation.

What does mold need to grow?

Mold does not need much help to grow. The key ingredients are:

- Moisture
- Nutrients
- Suitable environment

With ideal conditions, mold can rapidly spread and infest a large area. Of all the ingredients needed, moisture is the most important. Eliminating moisture is the most effective means of hindering mold growth.

What are the hazards of mold in your home?

Mold can be a problem in the home. Too much mold growth can be hazardous to your health. Mold also destroys building materials and home furnishings. So, it is important to stop mold growth.

As mentioned, mold can affect your health. The type and severity of symptoms will depend on a person's susceptibility and the degree of exposure. Exposure is mainly through the inhalation of mold spores and other tiny "hyphal" fragments. Exposure can also occur by skin contact and swallowing.

How do I attack a mold problem?

Excessive moisture in the home is the main cause of indoor mold. The most important step in solving a mold problem is to identify and correct the moisture sources that allowed the growth in the first place. The following are recommendations to prevent and eliminate indoor mold problems:

1. Reduce the relative humidity in your living space, basement and or crawl space. Purchase a hydrometer. It is an instrument that reads the percentage of humidity. To discourage mold growth, humidity levels should range between 30 to 50 percent. Buy a good dehumidifier. Empty the water collection reservoir frequently.
2. Get up in the attic and check for leaks. **BE CAREFUL WHEN DOING THIS.** Look for other leaks around windows, gutters, soffits, and foundations. Make your basement leak proof. Install foundation drains and make sure your sump pump is working properly.
3. If you have moderate mold growth on a hard, non-porous surface, scrub the mold with a solution of strong detergent and water. If a bleach solution is used, **DO NOT MIX WITH OTHER CHEMICALS** and make sure adequate ventilation is provided.
4. Have your heating ducts cleaned by a reputable company. This should be a last step not the first. The ventilation system provides a favorable habitat for mold and mold growth. Once in the ventilation system, the mold spores will be passed throughout the home any time forced-air heat or air conditioning is used.
5. Install a HEPA filter in your heating system. If you do not have a forced-air heating system, portable HEPA filters are widely available at department stores, home improvement stores, and over the internet.
6. **SEE A PHYSICIAN** if you or your children are experiencing health problems that could be associated with mold.
7. If testing reveals a serious mold problem, consider having a professional repair leaks and remove contaminated building components. If the mold infestation is severe, it may be necessary for you to move out of the home until it has been made safe again.

WHEN SHOULD I TEST FOR MOLD?

You should assume there is a problem in your home if you see mold or smell mold odors. **Testing your home for mold should never use up resources that can be spent correcting the problem.** Sometimes, however, mold growth is hidden or difficult to locate. In these cases, it may be useful to have your home tested in order to determine the extent of the contamination and where cleaning is needed. **Presently, there are no current limits of recommended levels of mold nor are there any regulations for people who test for mold.**

A useful publication from the Environmental Protection Agency:

“A BRIEF GUIDE TO MOLD, MOISTURE AND YOUR HOME”

<http://www.epa.gov/mold/moldguide.html>

If you decide to have your home tested, the following companies may be of help.

COMPANIES TESTING FOR MOLD

<p>ACM Environmental Services 2100 Goshen Rd, Suite 200 Fort Wayne, IN 46808 260.483.9795 Contact: Michael Dials</p>	<p>Environmental Technology Consulting 2701 S Coliseum Blvd, Suite 1219 Fort Wayne, IN 260.422.7784 Contact: Lonnie Ward</p>
<p>Allied Environmental Services 1867 South Dixie Highway Lima, OH 800.992.5781 Contact: Steve Carr or Keith Boyd</p>	<p>Greentree Environmental Services, Inc. 5287 Central Ave Portage, IN 46368 219.764-2828 877.476.8733 Contact: Irene Smith</p>
<p>A to Z Home Inspection Team, Inc. 15031 Hunters Ln Huntertown, IN 46748 260.637.8679 Contact: Tina Zimmerman</p>	<p>IAQ Services Inc. 11236 Harrington St Fishers, IN 46038 800.862.9655 317.598.0148 Commercial/Industrial Contact: Stuart Bagley, CIH</p>
<p>Dr. Thad Godish, Ball State University Muncie, IN 47305 765.285.5782</p>	<p>Mold Masters PO Box 106 Churubusco, IN 46723 260.424.7360</p>
<p>Home Inspection Services 5110 Nassau Dr Fort Wayne, IN 46815 260.485.0615 Contact: James Goddard</p>	<p>Talon Restoration & Cleaning 1750 Summit St New Haven, IN 46744 260.748.4545 Contact: Denny Metzger</p>
<p>Concentra Environmental Health & Safety Services 10339 Dawsons Creek Blvd, Ste 7E Fort Wayne, IN 260.497.7491 Contact: Kristen</p>	

COMPANIES PERFORMING MOLD REMEDIATION

<p>Paul Davis 3010-01 Butler Ridge Pkwy Fort Wayne, In 260.436.7510 Contact: Sandy</p>	<p>Environmental Management Specialists, Inc. 2409 Hunter St Huntertown, IN 260.637.9414 Contact: Bill Papaik</p>
<p>Greentree Environmental Services, Inc. 5287 Central Ave Portage, IN 46368 219.764.0615 Contact: Irene Smith</p>	<p>Talon Restoration & Cleaning 1750 Summit St New Haven, IN 46744 260.748.4545 Contact: Denny Metzger</p>
<p>Pro-Techs, Inc. 2777 Sherman Blvd Fort Wayne, IN 46808 260.471.3165 Contact: Joe Clark</p>	

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