

MOLD: What is Mold?

- Mold is a natural and necessary part of the environment. Mold breaks down organic matter.
- There are many different types of mold
- Molds reproduce by emitting spores, which are like seeds that blow through the air.
- Inhalation of mold spores is the source of health problems



When is mold a problem?

- Most molds, including the commonly found Cladosporium, are not toxic however:
 - Mold spores act as allergens, resulting in difficulty breathing, sneezing, headaches and water eyes
 - Mold spores can be an asthma trigger

How Much Is To Much?

- Some people are more sensitive than others
- Cannot determine the type & concentration of mold spores in the air without testing.
- Testing is very expensive
 - Evaluate by sight & smell on your own

Toxic Mold: Can It Happen?

- Toxic mold is rare, but does exist. It is called *Stachybotrys*
- Produces highly toxic compound, called mycotoxins.
- Toxic mold is sometimes called “Black Mold” But remember, not all black molds are toxic.
- There is no way to tell without testing.

What to do? Better safe than sorry: Remediation & Prevention

- Not worth risking human health and the building's structure
- HPD will issue violations
 - “550” Mold violations (12,500 issued in 2005)
 - Class B= Less than 25 Square Feet in a room or 100 S.F in the apartment
 - Class C= More than 25 SqFt in a room, 100 SqFt in the apartment

Regulations

- HPD currently uses different parts of the housing code to regulate mold. However, there is no law
- A law is very likely to be passed in the next year to 2 years----what is the HDFC perspective?

What Does Mold Need?

- Nutrients
- Moisture/Water
- Oxygen
- Temperature
- Light



The most important thing to focus on is **WATER**. Without a water source, mold will not grow.

Identifying Risks: moisture + nutrients=mold growth

Moisture from leaks will result in mold growth if left unchecked. Fix the leak, fix your mold problem.

Food sources for mold can be any fiber based material. Sheetrock is especially well suited for mold growth. Mold in one apartment can spread to others and damage the building.

Controlling Moisture

– Building wide

- Check for moisture in the basement. Invest in a dehumidifier if needed.
- Check the water meter 1x month
- Get a free leak audit from the DEP!

– Each tenant—control leaks.

- Water using fixtures
- Gaps in windows, walls
- Ventillation or insulating where needed

Remediation of Existing Mold

- Covering up mold will not help. It must be removed.
- Wear protection: Goggles, gloves and respirator
- Find the source of water
- If the visible mold is an area 10 square feet or less, the EPA says it is safe to work on your own. Larger than that, you should consider hiring a qualified professional

Remediation continued

- The cleaning technique depends on where the mold growth is located.
- Topical mold can be washed off with a disinfectant, however many times mold stretches into the wall where it cannot be seen.

Resources

- UHAB Vendor Directory UHAB.coop
- EPA Booklet
- NYC Dept Health website
 - “Guidelines on Assessment and Remediation of Fungi in Indoor Environments”