

Mold Prevention

There is no practical way for you to eliminate all of the molds and mold spores from indoor environment. But FEMA offers suggestions to help control the moisture and growth in your home:

Stop the Water.

- Fix leaks in pipes and any damp areas around tubs and sinks, so that biological pollutants don't have growing environments.
- Rebuild or retrofit using water-resistant building materials such as tiles, stone, deep-sealed concrete, etc.
- Prevent seepage of water from outdoors into your house. Ensure that rain water from the gutters or roof drain away from the house.

Keep It Clean.

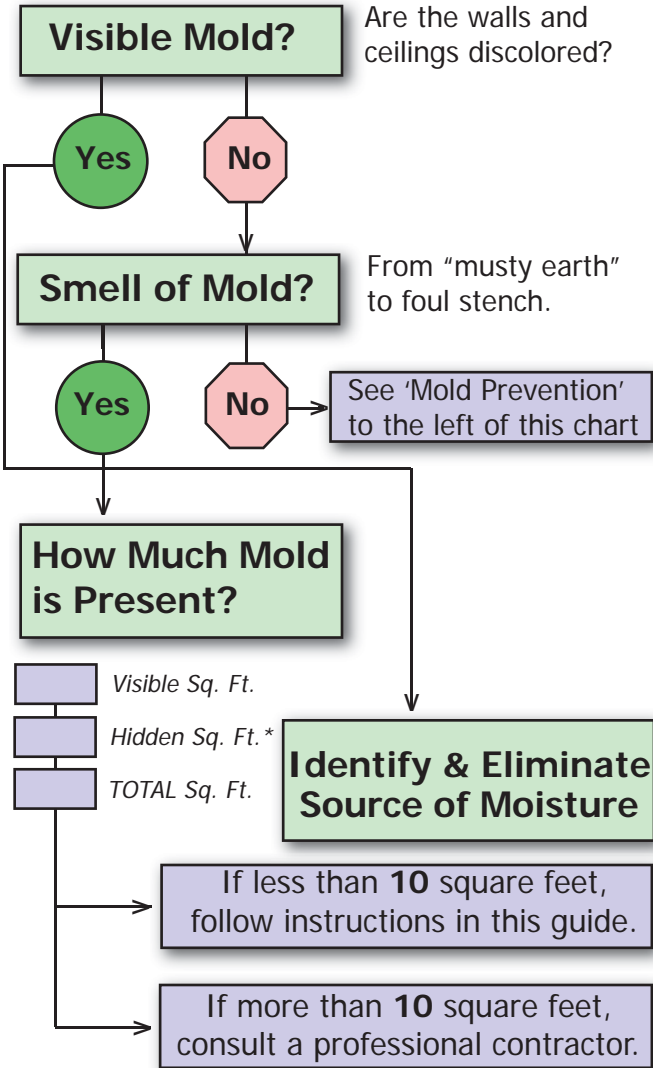
- Clean fabrics often and keep them dry. Soil promotes mildew growth. Store clean fabric items in well ventilated areas.
- Consider having air ducts cleaned if you suspect mold exists inside the ducts, or if duct insulation has been wet.

Keep It Dry.

- Reduce the moisture in the air with dehumidifiers, fans and open windows or air conditioners; especially in hot weather. DO NOT use fans if mold already exists.
- In moisture-prone areas, choose carpets of man-made fibers.

Disinfect It.

- Routinely check potential problem spots for moldy odors, and disinfect often using a 10 percent solution of bleach and water (1-1/4 to 1-1/2 cup of bleach to one gallon water), or a commercial disinfectant.



* Hidden sources may be air ducts, attics, basements and wall cavities.



Ohio Emergency Management Agency

a division of

Ohio Department of Public Safety
2855 West Dublin-Granville Road
Columbus OH 43235

(614) 889-7150

EMA 0011 7/06

Dealing with Mold & Mildew in your home after a flood



Guidelines from:



Ohio Emergency Management Agency



FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency



Ohio Department of Health

Mold & Mildew



After a flood, excess moisture and standing water contribute to the growth of mold in homes and other buildings. If your home has been flooded, you can assume that it has been contaminated with mold, which can become a health risk for you and your family.

Mildew (mold in the early stage) and molds grow on wood products, ceiling tiles, cardboard, wallpaper, carpets, drywall, fabric, plants, foods, insulation, decaying leaves and other organic materials.

Mold growths (colonies) can start to grow on a damp surface within 24 or 48 hours. Molds digest organic material, eventually destroying the material they grow on, then spread to destroy adjacent organic material.

Health Effects of Mold Exposure

- Stuffy nose, sneezing, red eyes and skin rash.
- Difficulty breathing; shortness of breath; dry, hacking cough.
- People with asthma and allergies to mold are susceptible to asthma attacks or wheezing.
- People with weakened immune systems or chronic lung diseases may develop mold infections in their lungs.
- If mold exposure is unavoidable, people sensitive to mold should wear tight-fitting masks.

Cleaning & Drying Out Your Home

- Open doors and windows. Let your home air out for at least 30 minutes before you stay inside for any length of time. Use fans to dry out your home, unless mold is present.
- If porous or permeable material has been wet for more than 48 hours, it needs to be discarded.
- Examples of absorbent items that cannot be cleaned of mold are: carpets, carpet padding, upholstery, wallpaper, dry wall, floor and ceiling tiles, clothing, leather, paper, books, wood and food.
- To remove mold from hard surfaces, mix a cleaning solution made of one cup of bleach in one gallon of water. Use a stiff brush to scrub rough surfaces and rinse with clean water. Dry the item or leave it out to air dry.
- To **prevent** mold growth, clean all wet items and surfaces with detergent and water, and fix any water problems such as leaks in roofs, walls or plumbing.
- Turning on air conditioners or heaters can spread mold spores and make the problem worse. Clean them before use.

Dealing with Flood Water

Flood water can be contaminated by waste from overflowing sewage systems, as well as toxic waste from cars and industrial plants. DO NOT eat or drink anything that has been in contact with flood water.

- If an open cut or wound is in contact with flood water, clean it with soap and water and use an antibacterial ointment to lower your risk of infection.
- Wash dishes, linens and clothes that have been contaminated by flood water by using hot water and detergent. Before using your washing machine or dishwasher, run them empty through one full hot water cycle using a disinfectant or sanitizer.
- Do not allow children to play in places or use toys that have been in contact with flood water. Disinfect contaminated toys by cleaning them with a cleaning mixture made with one cup of bleach to five gallons of water.

For additional information on cleaning up from floods, mold and mildew, visit the following sites:

www.redcross.org
www.fema.gov
www.ema.ohio.gov
www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/mold/
www.epa.gov/iaq
EPA guide: "Mold, Moisture and Your Home"