

Mold Frequently Asked Questions

Isn't the only dangerous mold Black Mold?

That sounds like someone who wants a simple answer. There are no simple answers. The cost of collecting a mold sample grows quickly as soon as we start to identify every species. The color is just one of many factors that go into mold identification. People are different, some people are very sensitive to mold. One person can not even notice a mold infestation. While another may experience difficulty breathing in the same atmosphere. So no, you cannot tell if a mold is dangerous by looking at the color.

Mold will just go away after it dries out.

Once something is infested with mold it is there forever. Clothing can be thoroughly washed in something that kills the mold and then the mold gets rinsed out of the fabric. Well kinda sorta, OK, but the dress or shirt will get moldy in a heartbeat the next time. Bedding and upholstered furniture that gets moldy is simply lost. Replace the upholstery. EPA says if it can be soaked in water and not lose its shape you may be able to clean it sufficiently. Think marble table top, on an iron frame.

I washed off the mold and painted over it, Good Enough?

You just wasted some good paint. What you see is a fraction of the mold, cleaning the surface does not begin to reach the mold. Moldy drywall needs to be removed and at least a foot of solid good not moldy drywall removed and the whole area replaced. The fiberglass insulation needs to go too. The wood may need to be replaced, if it is structurally damaged.

Why is there mold anyway?

A really competent CIH did a presentation at our annual meeting. I can't remember his name, but I remember the talk. "Mold is like Ivory Soap 99 percent pure. Every mold incident is an example of some other failure. A lack of maintenance, Allowing leaves to accumulate on a roof will lead to a roof leak. The roof leak will lead to a mold infestation. Construction defect, will lead to a leak and that will lead to mold. Plumbing failure of almost any kind will lead to mold. Waste water pipes that are cracked, supply pipes with pin holes, joints that were not sealed properly all will lead to mold infestation. Fire suppression systems that open during a fire are particularly effective in inoculating building material with all kinds of mold and bacteria."

I have a tenant who is a real faker, I have no problem with the mold and it really has an odor. The tenant claims they get sick from the mold.

You are going to have to rethink that. Penicillin (the world war II wonder drug) can and does kill people. Allergic reactions are far from uncommon. True it saves lives, but for some it is a death threat. Mold is known to be a serious health threat to anyone with a compromised immune system. It is a serious health threat, but it can be easily mitigated, with the correct approach.

More information is at:

CDC Information: <https://www.cdc.gov/mold/faqs.htm>

AIHA Resource Center:

<https://www.aiha.org/public-resources/consumer-resources/disaster-response-resource-center/mold-resource-center>

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7/10/2021 ©

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