



Home Tips



• CHRISTIAN BUILDING INSPECTORS, INC., 3697 HABERSHAM LANE, DULUTH, GEORGIA 30096, 770-849-0920 • JUNE 2015 •

Q & A

EPA's Guide To Mold – Part 1

The guide provides information and guidance for homeowners and renters on how to clean up residential mold problems and how to prevent mold growth.

Mold Basics

- The key to mold control is moisture control.
- If mold is a problem in your home, you should clean up the mold promptly and fix the water problem.
- It is important to dry water-damaged areas and items within 24-48 hours to prevent mold growth.



Mold growing outdoors on firewood. Molds come in many colors; both white and black molds are shown here.

Why is mold growing in my home?

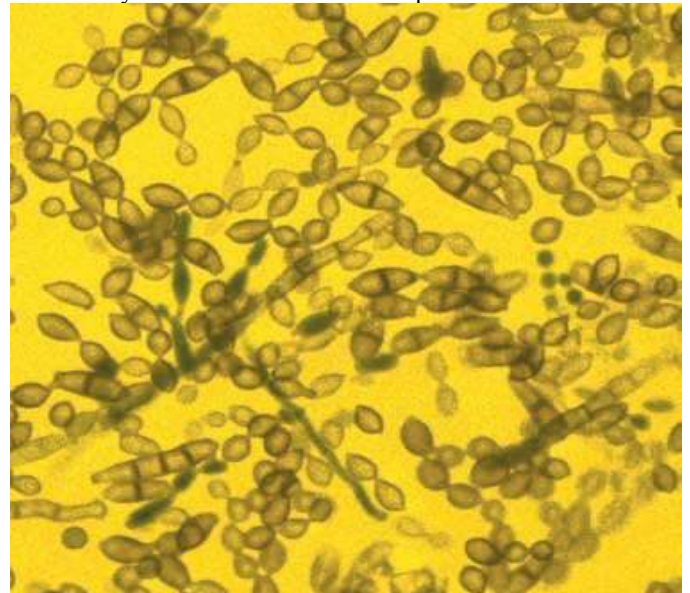
Molds are part of the natural environment. Outdoors, molds play a part in nature by breaking down dead organic matter such as fallen leaves and dead trees; but indoors, mold growth should be avoided. Molds reproduce by means of tiny spores; the spores are invisible to the naked eye and float through outdoor and indoor air. Mold may begin growing indoors when mold spores land on surfaces that are wet. There are many types of mold, and none of them will grow without water or moisture.

Can mold cause health problems?

Molds are usually not a problem indoors, unless mold spores land on a wet or damp spot and begin growing. Molds have the potential to cause health problems. Molds produce allergens

(substances that can cause allergic reactions), irritants, and in some cases, potentially toxic substances (mycotoxins).

Inhaling or touching mold or mold spores may cause allergic reactions in sensitive individuals. Allergic responses include hay fever-type symptoms, such as sneezing, runny nose, red eyes, and skin rash (dermatitis). Allergic reactions to mold are common. They can be immediate or delayed. Molds can also cause asthma attacks in people with asthma who are allergic to mold. In addition, mold exposure can irritate the eyes, skin, nose, throat, and lungs of both mold-allergic and non-allergic people. Symptoms other than the allergic and irritant types are not commonly reported as a result of inhaling mold. Research on mold and health effects is ongoing. The EPA brochure provides a brief overview; it does not describe all potential health effects related to mold exposure. For more detailed information, consult a health professional. You may also wish to consult your state or local health department.



Magnified mold spores. Molds can gradually destroy the things they grow on. You can prevent damage to your home and furnishings, save money, and avoid potential health problems by controlling moisture and eliminating mold growth.

How do I get rid of mold?

It is impossible to get rid of all mold and mold spores indoors; some mold spores will be found floating through the air and in house dust. The mold spores will not grow if moisture is not present. Indoor mold growth can and should be prevented or controlled by controlling moisture indoors. If there is mold growth in your home, you must clean up the mold and fix the water problem. If you clean up the mold, but

don't fix the water problem, then, most likely, the mold problem will come back.



If you already have a mold problem – ACT QUICKLY. Mold damages what it grows on. The longer it grows, the more damage it can cause. Leaky window – mold is beginning to rot the wooden frame and window sill.

Who should do the cleanup?

Who should do the cleanup depends on a number of factors. One consideration is the size of the mold problem. If the moldy area is less than about 10 square feet (less than roughly a 3 ft. by 3 ft. patch), in most cases, you can handle the job yourself, following the guidelines below. However:

- If there has been a lot of water damage, and/or mold growth covers more than 10 square feet, consult the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guide: *Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings*. Although focused on schools and commercial buildings, this document is applicable to other building types. It is available on the internet at: www.epa.gov/mold.
- If you choose to hire a contractor (or other professional service provider) to do the cleanup, make sure the contractor has experience cleaning up mold. Check references and ask the contractor to follow the recommendations in EPA's *Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings*, the guidelines of the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH), or other guidelines from professional or government organizations.
- If you suspect that the heating/ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC) system may be contaminated with mold (it is part of

an identified moisture problem, for instance, or there is mold near the intake to the system), consult EPA's guide *Should You Have the Air Ducts in Your Home Cleaned?* before taking further action. Do not run the HVAC system if you know or suspect that it is contaminated with mold - it could spread mold throughout the building. Visit www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs to download a copy of the EPA guide.

- If the water and/or mold damage was caused by sewage or other contaminated water, then call in a professional who has experience cleaning and fixing buildings damaged by contaminated water.
- If you have health concerns, consult a health professional before starting cleanup.

Source: <http://www.epa.gov/mold/pdfs/moldguide.pdf>

If you have a question, comment, or home tip, send your letter to *Home Tips*, Christian Building Inspectors, Inc., 3697 Habersham Lane, Duluth, Georgia 30096. You can email your questions to us at rod@cbiga.com.

We reserve the right to edit questions for length.

Quote Of The Month

"IT IS NOT ABOUT WAITING FOR THE STORM TO PASS, IT'S ABOUT LEARNING TO DANCE IN THE RAIN."

- UNKNOWN

A Tip Of The Hat To:

Joanna Singleton

**Keller Williams Realty
2651 Dallas Highway
Marietta, Georgia 30064
770-317-6818**



Thank You

• CHRISTIAN BUILDING INSPECTORS, INC. •

• Member: ASHI, GAHI, ICC •

- International Code Council Residential Combination Inspector No. 5185008-R5 •
- Fully Insured With Errors & Omissions and Liability Insurance •
- Office: 1-888-257-0365 or 770-849-0920, Fax 770-849-0540, Cell 404-697-4129 •
- Web Page: <http://www.christianbuildinginspectors.com>, Email: rod@cbiga.com •



- Site
- Drainage
- Foundations
- Floor Slabs
- Crawl Spaces
- Basements
- Structural
- Interior
- Exterior
- Appliances
- Ventilation
- Electrical
- Plumbing
- Heating
- Air Conditioning
- Attic
- Roofing
- Radon
- Termite Letters
- Warranty
- New Homes