

You've got mold! What now?

A Survival guide

A checklist of things to do and questions to ask to help you get past mold issues....

- Q Who is claiming that there is a problem? What are their credentials?
 - § Remember there is no licensing required in this state
 - § Organizations such as the Indoor Environmental Standards Organization and the American Indoor Air Quality Council offer credible certifications for mold inspectors.
- Q Where is the problem located?
 - § Get specifics- is the problem near a potential water incursion site such as... plumbing fixtures, windows, exterior doors, ceilings, laundry rooms, kitchens?
- Q What caused the problem?
 - § Does the seller know how the problem occurred?
 - § Who fixed the leak- homeowner or plumber? Who dried it out- homeowner or professional?
- Q Ask, is this a surface problem or could the mold have gotten behind the surface?
 - § If this is a small surface problem, it may be cleanable by wiping
 - § If the damage comes from inside a wall chamber, more than wiping will be needed.
 - § Call a Certified Residential Mold Inspector to investigate.
- Q What type & how many samples were used to determine if there is a problem?
 - § Check to be sure that a control sample was taken for comparison.
 - § Air samples are only good for the immediate air space. Air sampling may not detect "hidden" mold.
 - § Wall chamber sampling is limited to the small section of wall being sampled and is not a truly conclusive test.
 - § Surface sampling (with either a Q-tip type swab or tape-lift) identifies which varieties of mold are present on the surface of the sampled building material.
 - § Cultured samples taken using a Petri dish indicate the presence and types of mold. Do-it-yourself test kits can produce false negative / false positive results. Use a certified mold inspector to do sampling.
- Q What constitutes a problem?
 - § If a report indicates that "excessive" mold exists, you should ask for the standards of practice that define what levels are "excessive". (Make sure a control sample was used.)
 - § At this time, there are no government regulations to indicate what levels of mold spores are too high.
- Q What is the least destructive, but most effective way, to solve the problem? Is a professional mold remediation contractor really necessary?
 - § If only the surface is affected and can be wiped clean, that may be all that is necessary.
 - § The majority of the mold problems need some type of remediation. **ONLY A REMEDIATION CONTRACTOR CAN PROPERLY PROTECT THE UNAFFECTED AREAS OF THE HOME DURING THE MOLD REMOVAL.**
 - § Only through a qualified remediation contractor can occupants of a home be safeguarded during remediation.
- Q How much is this going to cost?
 - § A remediation contractor will always be more expensive than a handyman. In fact, they are usually several times higher. Try to get a worst case/best case price.
- Q Will post-remediation sampling be done to prove the problem has been taken care of?
 - § Once the remediation is finished, the space must be sampled to ensure the cleaning was successful. Success is achieved once the overall spore count is comparable to the exterior spore count.
- Q Will this guarantee all mold is out of the home?
 - § Currently, there is no technology that can identify all mold inside a home such as mold hidden behind cabinets, in walls, etc.