

Frequently Asked Questions on Mold

How do I test for Mold?

Testing of sampling for mold is usually not necessary. In most cases, if visible mold growth is present, sampling is unnecessary. There are no Environmental Protection Agency, or other federal limits for mold or mold spores in the home, so testing cannot be used to check a building's compliance with federal mold standards.

If you are going to test for mold, you will find mold. When testing is done it is usually to compare inside levels of mold spores to levels outside the home. Testing for specific types of mold can be very expensive.

It may be important to sample surfaces to ensure that they have been adequately cleaned or remediated after a mold occurrence. Also check the moisture level in wood cavities to ensure that it is below

12.5. % before resealing any areas that may have flooded.

What can I do about mold in my apartment/rental unit?

If you see or smell mold in your apartment it should be cleaned up and the moisture source that caused it must be repaired. Inform your landlord in writing of the problem as soon as you are aware of it. There is no state or federal laws dealing specifically with mold in rental units.

However, Minnesota law does require that rental units be maintained by the landlord to be habitable and in good repair. For more detailed information see [Mold for Renters](#).

Will Air Cleaners remove mold?

Air cleaners will not cure mold problems in the home. A high-efficiency air filter that removes mold spores is capable of reducing the number of mold spores in the air, but will do nothing for those spores that have settled onto surfaces such as counters, floors, furniture, draperies, etc. The Environmental Protection Agency reports states to be especially careful of air cleaners that produce ozone. Ozone is a lung irritant and it should not be generated in occupied spaces. For more information see <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/residair.html>

Will ultraviolet light kill mold spores?

Ultraviolet light will destroy any viruses, bacteria, and molds that pass through. The problem is that many mold spores in the home have settled out of the air and as such will never pass through an air duct system that has a UV filter.

Will painting over mold solve the problem?

NO! The mold needs to be removed from the materials it is growing on with soap and water then dried thoroughly. If it is a porous material that cannot be cleaned such as drywall or particle board it needs to be removed and replaced.

This fact sheet provides information from the Purdue Cooperative Extension Service.

For more information contact your local county Extension office. Summer, 2005

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