



Mold Prevention - Tip Sheet

*By Ed Cipriani, FIHM
Director, Facility Operations
Mohawk College*

Mold continues to be an issue for property owners and managers. Property Management Professionals must understand how to prevent and respond to mold growth. Below is information to help you better assess and battle mold in your communities.

1. Mold damages building materials, affecting the look, smell, and possibly, concerning wood-framed buildings, affecting the structural integrity of the buildings.
2. If you suspect Mold has damaged building integrity, consult a structural engineer or professional with the appropriate expertise.
3. When excessive moisture or water accumulates indoors, mold growth often occurs, particularly if the moisture problem remains uncorrected.
4. Mold needs only a viable seed (spore), a nutrient source, moisture, and the right temperature to multiply - this explains why mold infestation is often found in damp, dark, hidden spaces as light and air circulation dry areas out, making them less hospitable for Mold. The Mold spores travel throughout the air and are being breathed in, especially affecting those with underlying breathing problems.
5. When assessing for mold, remember that mold requires MOISTURE, WARMTH, & FOOD. All three conditions are necessary for growth, with the most likely growing places: bathroom, basement, & kitchens.
6. Moisture or high relative humidity of 60-70% for an extended period will generate mold growth. Temperatures below 21 C or 70 F degrees are best for prevention. Air movement aids in evaporation and decreases moisture. Stagnant air supports mold growth.
7. Regular unit inspections identify mold, as living habits can affect mold's ability to grow. Look for stains or discoloration on floors, walls, window panes, ceiling tiles, fabrics and carpets. Look for obvious signs of leaks, condensation, flooding, or a musty odour. Immediate action is important.
8. Finding the cause is very important.
 - a. Inspection of ductwork
 - b. What is introducing moisture into your environment and stop it
 - c. Remove the excess moisture
 - d. Mop, sponge, vacuum and squeegee standing water out of the area
 - e. The affected area must be protected from people and not entered without PPE.
 - f. Suspected Mold can be tested and identified.
9. During a site review, look for the following potential issues as they contribute to mold growth.
 - a. Defective construction materials
 - b. Leaking material joints/improper flashing or caulking
 - c. Dirty environments



- d. Bug and rodent feces
 - e. Poor drainage
 - f. Flood damaged buildings
 - g. Roof leaks and downspouts that direct water into or under a building
 - h. Grading drainage should be away from the foundation
 - i. Unvented combustion appliances.
10. Actions to help prevent mold
- a. Reducing the humidity in buildings
 - b. When practical, increase ventilation or air movement by opening doors and/or windows
 - c. Use fans as needed
 - d. Increase air temperatures
 - e. Cover cold surfaces, such as cold water pipes, with insulation
 - f. Rust is an indicator that condensation occurs on drainpipes – insulate to prevent condensation
- g. Building occupants should report all plumbing leaks and moisture problems immediately
 - h. Moisture control is the key to mold control. When water leaks or spills occur indoors – act promptly. Any initial water infiltration should be stopped and cleaned promptly. A prompt response (within 24-48 hours) and thorough clean-up, drying, and/or removal of water-damaged materials will prevent or limit mold growth
 - i. Repairing plumbing leaks and leaks in the building structure as soon as possible
 - j. Preventing moisture from condensing by increasing surface temperature or reducing the moisture level in the air (humidity)
 - k. Keeping HVAC drip pans clean, flowing properly, and unobstructed
- l. Performing scheduled building / HVAC inspections and maintenance, including filter changes
 - m. Maintaining indoor relative humidity below 70% (25 - 60%, if possible)
 - n. Education of residents, remind them to advise the Property Manager
 - o. Indoor Air Quality Assessment tests for contaminants in the air.
 - p. Use Mold & Mildew Resistant Sealant Caulk.
11. Government Links
- a. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/alert-mould-workplace-buildings#:~:text=If%20mould%20contamination%20is%20extensive,the%20health%20effects%20of%20mould>
 - b. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/healthy-living/addressing-mould-mould-your-home.html> ♦

UPCOMING IHM EVENT



IHM
Institute of Housing Management

Property & Building Administration

5-Day Online Course

February 13, 2023 - February 17, 2023 | 09:00 AM - 04:30 PM (Daily) via Zoom

Monday - Thursday: 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. - Zoom Session

Monday - Thursday: 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. - Asynchronous Learning

[Details and to Register](#)

Student will be required to self-study from 1:00 - 4:00 pm each day and prepare for the following day of Review.

Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. - Exam

Visit our website's [Events Page](#) for information and updates on all IHM Events