



Mold and Moisture

ACTION STEPS

Use downspouts to direct rainwater away from the house.

Repair leaking roofs, walls, doors and windows.

Keep surfaces dry and clean.

If you have a dryer, make sure it is vented to the outside.

Run a fan vented to the outside when showering and cooking.

Store clothes and towels clean and dry—do not let them stay wet in the laundry basket or washing machine.

**For more information:
406-994-3451 or the
number listed below.**



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**Resource HUD office of
healthy homes.**

Should you be concerned?

Most of us have seen mold or moisture around the home. But did you know that mold is alive? It grows on wet or damp surfaces. It is often gray or black but can also be white, orange, or green. It can grow out in the open on places like walls, clothes, and appliances. But you may also find it in more hidden places—under carpets or in walls and attics. Mold often smells musty. Mildew is a common name for mold. If you live near the ocean or in a damp climate, there may be more mold in your home than in homes in other places.

Mold produces spores, tiny specks you can't see and that float through the air. When you breathe in mold spores, they get into your lungs. This can cause health problems. People with allergies to mold may have reactions. They include watery eyes, runny or stuffed up noses, sneezing, itching, wheezing, trouble breathing, headaches, and tiredness. Mold can even trigger asthma attacks.

Mold is almost everywhere, but it is not health to live where mold is growing. Because mold needs moisture to grow, try to keep your home and everything in it dry. It's important to fix any moisture problem in your home right away. Mold can grow fast, so it's best not to wait. To stop mold from growing, quickly dry or throw away anything that has gotten wet.

How do I clean up mold?

Protect yourself when cleaning up mold. Wear long sleeves and pants, shoes and socks, dust mask, rubber gloves, and goggles to protect your eyes. Open a window to let in fresh air while you're working.

Throw away things like carpet, wallboard, ceiling tiles, and insulation that have been wet for more than 2 days. Wrap anything you're going to throw away in plastic to stop mold from spreading. Cleaning up mold puts the spores in the air, so it's a good idea to wear a respirator. Keep small children, elderly, sick people, and anyone with allergies or asthma away during cleanup.

Clean hard surfaces with a mix of laundry detergent or dishwashing soap and water. You may have to scrub with a brush. Rinse the area with clean water and dry quickly by wiping away the water and using a fan. Chlorine bleach will kill mold growing on surfaces. It does not kill mold spores in the air, and dead mold can still cause allergic reactions.

If you find an area of mold greater than 15 square feet, it's best to hire a professional for assistance. No matter what kind of mold you have, you need to get rid of it and fix the moisture problems that made it grow.