

## How Do You Know if You Have a Mold Problem?

If you see mold growing in your home, then obviously you have a mold problem. However, mold often grows in places where it's not easily spotted, like inside walls, under floors, in attics, and inside heating and air conditioning ducts. If you smell a musty odor in your home, you probably have mold growing somewhere. If your home has been flooded or had extensive water damage of any kind, you almost certainly have some mold, even if you don't see any. Even a small water leak can cause mold to grow.



**If you have mold in your house act fast!**

**Mold causes more damage as more time goes by.**

## DO I NEED SOMEONE TO CLEAN IT FOR ME?

Who should do the cleanup depends on a number of different factors.

- The size of the mold problem
- More than 10 Square feet (3 ft. x 3 ft. patch)
- There has been a lot of water damage
- Caused by sewage or other contaminated water
- If you suspect that the HVAC system may be contaminated with mold or is part of the moisture problem

## 9 TIPS ON HOW TO CLEAN MOLD

If you're comfortable removing the mold on your own, here are some steps and tips to help you with the remediation process.

**Protect yourself.** Put on personal protective equipment (gloves, mask, and goggles) to protect your eyes, nose, mouth, and skin. An N-95 mask is suggested.

**Toss!** Take it all out! Anything that was wet with water and can't be cleaned and dried completely within 24 to 48 hours should be taken outside. Take photos of discarded items for insurance claims.

**Air it out.** Open all doors and windows when you are working, and leave as many open as you safely can when you leave.

**Circulate.** When electricity is safe to use, use fans and dehumidifiers to remove moisture. You want to stop it from coming back so continue to do this if you find that the affected area is a little more humid than usual.

**Don't mix cleaners.** If you use cleaning products, do not mix the cleaning products together. **DO NOT** mix bleach and ammonia because it can create toxic vapors. If using bleach, do not mix more than 1 cup of bleach to 1 gallon of water.



**Scrub surfaces.** Clean with water and a detergent. Remove all mold you can see. Dry the area right away.

**Don't cover it, remove it.** Painting or caulking over mold will not prevent mold from growing. Fix the water problem completely and clean up all the mold before you paint or caulk.

**Dry it up.** Dry your home and everything in it as quickly as possible, within 24 to 48 hours if you can.

**Once you have identified the cause of the mold.** Make sure during the cleanup that it is fixed so that the mold will not return. If there was a leak in the roof, make sure it's repaired. If a pipe causes a water leak in a wall, make sure it's fixed. If the humidity level on your home humidifier is set too high, make sure it is turned lower. You don't want the mold to return.

## WHY YOU SHOULD GET RID OF MOLD

The most common mold symptoms are similar to symptoms of exposure to other environmental allergens, and include things like:

- Runny nose
- Headaches/migraines
- Wheezing/coughing
- Asthma attacks
- Increased chances of bronchitis and respiratory infections

Less common mold symptoms include:

- Respiratory Infections
- Scar tissue in the lungs caused by long term exposure to mold
- Joint pain from mycotoxins

*Your pets are at risk for these symptoms as well.*

If you do decide to hire a contractor or other professional service provider to do the mold clean up, make sure that they have experience in cleaning up the type of mold that is effecting your house.

Check references and ask the contractor or other professional to follow recommendations made by the EPA, guidelines of the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists, or other guidelines from professionals or government organizations.

Colorado currently has **no** set regulations on mold clean up or repair.

Montezuma County  
Health Department

106 West North Street  
Cortez, Colorado  
81321  
(970)564-4763

## INFORMATION ON YOUR HOUSE AND MOLD

