

# Mold Safety

May 22, 2012



# What is Mold

- ▶ Mold is alive, but it is neither a plant nor an animal. Mold is a type of **fungus**. It is part of a group of living organisms that are very common and serve an important role in the environment to break down plant or animal matter, like fallen leaves, wood, dirt, and food. It is present both inside and outdoors year round and can be various colors including white, **orange**, **green**, or black. Molds reproduce by releasing microscopic spores into the air, which can enter homes through windows, doors, cracks, and vents. Mold may begin growing indoors when mold spores land on surfaces that are wet.

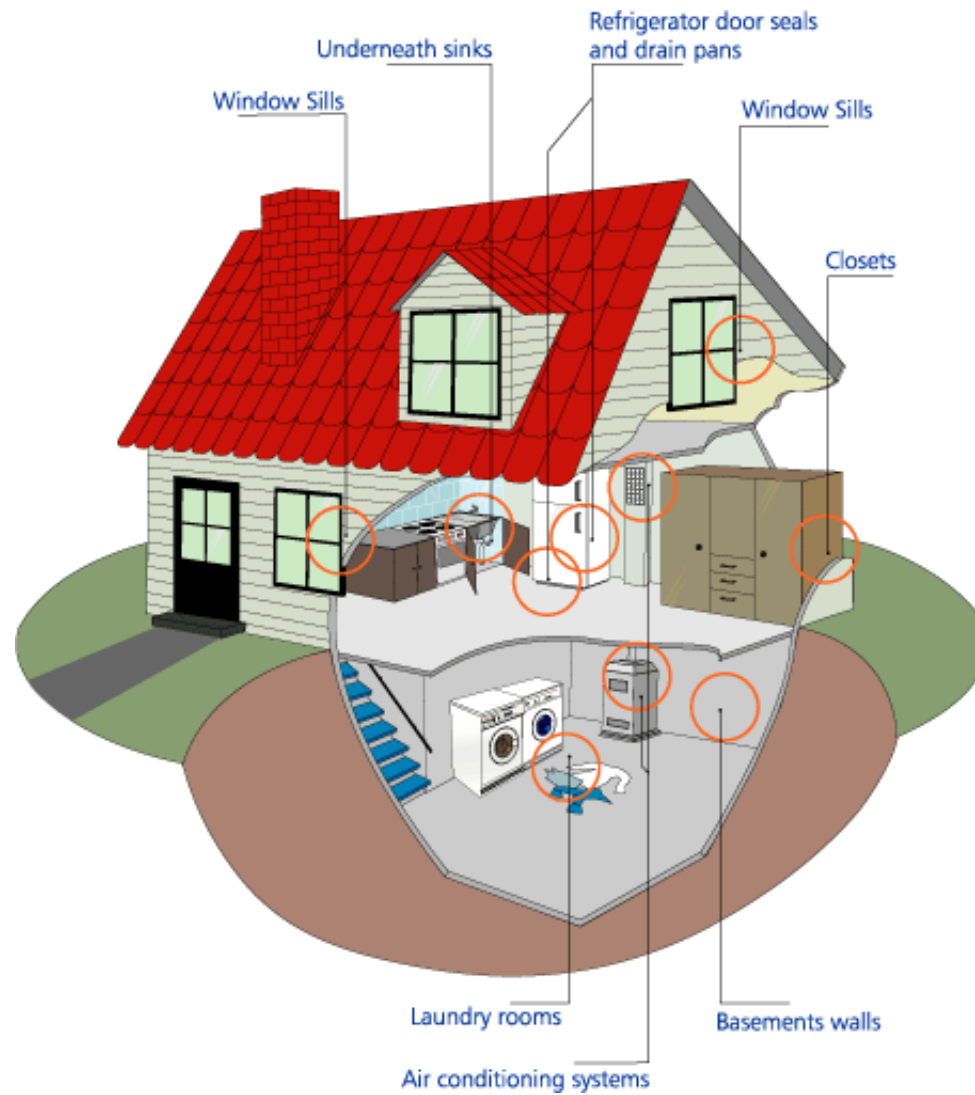
# Where Mold Collects



- ▶ Mold can be found in at least four areas of every home in America. Since moisture is required for mold spores to grow, you need to be aware of places in your home that are frequently damp.



# Where Mold Collects



# Mold Exposure Symptoms

- ▶ Sneezing
- ▶ Itching Skin
- ▶ Redness/Skin Irritation
- ▶ Watery Eyes
- ▶ Itching Eyes
- ▶ Headache
- ▶ Body Aches



- ▶ Constant Headaches
- ▶ Nose Bleeds
- ▶ Feelings of Constant Fatigue
- ▶ Breathing Disorders
- ▶ Coughing up Blood or Black looking Debris
- ▶ Nausea
- ▶ Diarrhea
- ▶ Vomiting
- ▶ Loss of Appetite
- ▶ Weight Loss
- ▶ Hair loss
- ▶ Skin Rashes
- ▶ Open Sores on the Skin
- ▶ Memory Loss "Short Term"
- ▶ Neurological & Nervous Disorders
- ▶ Asthma Attacks or Breathing Disorders
- ▶ Ear Infections and Pain
- ▶ Chronic Sinus Infections
- ▶ Chronic Bronchitis
- ▶ Pain in the Joints and Muscles
- ▶ Depression

Most Common Symptoms

Advanced Symptoms

# Do I have mold?



Moisture Meter

- ▶ If you have your home tested, a technician will have to take an outdoor air sample at the same time as the indoor sample. This allows the technician to determine whether the number of spores inside your home is significantly higher than the number outside your home. A higher indoor level could mean that mold is growing indoors. Before hiring a technician, check with your local health department for recommendations of a qualified laboratory, technician or industrial hygienist.
- ▶ It is important to hire a professional environmental testing company that only conducts testing, not mold remediation or mold removal, so you are assured of an accurate and unbiased assessment.
- ▶ In the Tampa Bay area, contact Dave Pitney, Council Certified Indoor Environmentalist, at 727-423-9798.





### **BEWARE! Ozone generators**

Some companies are making false or misleading claims regarding the use of ozone generators to control molds and fungi. These may include statements implying that the device is recommended or endorsed by any agency of the federal government or making any false claims to the effectiveness of the product. To report any misleading claim regarding the use of ozone generators, contact the Michigan Department of Agriculture at (517) 373-1087.



# Mold Removal



Any treatment of mold must begin with stopping the water coming into the area, whether it is by leak, condensation, excessive humidity, or flooding. If an area is cleaned, but the moisture problem remains, the mold will return.

Caution: Click [here](#) to read why you should not buy ozone generating air purifiers!

# Mold Remediation

- ▶ [The following excerpt is taken from the Environmental Protection Agency website.](#) The purpose of mold remediation is to remove the mold to prevent human exposure and damage to building materials and furnishings. It is necessary to clean up mold contamination, not just to kill the mold. Dead mold is still allergenic, and some dead molds are potentially toxic. **The use of a biocide, such as chlorine bleach, is not recommended as a routine practice during mold remediation, although there may be instances where professional judgment may indicate its use** (for example, when immune-compromised individuals are present). In most cases, it is not possible or desirable to sterilize an area; a background level of mold spores will remain in the air (roughly equivalent to or lower than the level in outside air). These spores will not grow if the moisture problem in the building has been resolved.





# Mold Remediation

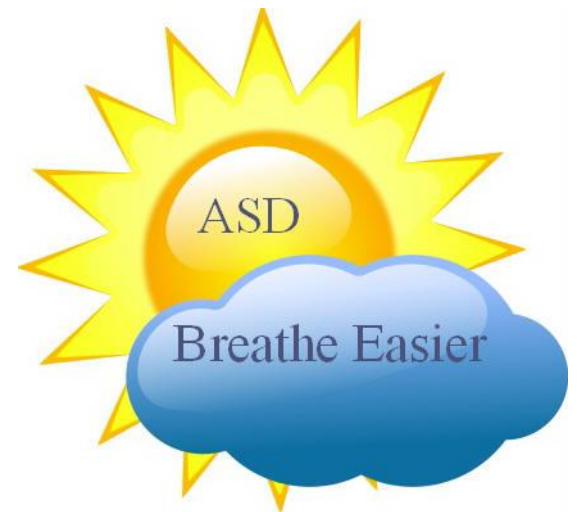
- ▶ All mold remediation should be performed by a contractor certified in mold remediation and familiar with guidelines and industry acceptable practices as to remediation standards, containment strategies, air flow control techniques and the proper use of personal protective equipment as outlined in IICRC, Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification S520–Standard and Reference Guide for Professional Mold Remediation and NADCA, National Air Duct Cleaners Association, ACR–2006 Assessment, Cleaning and Restoration of HVAC systems. –Dave Pitney, CIE



*“The best way out is always through.”*

*~Robert Frost*

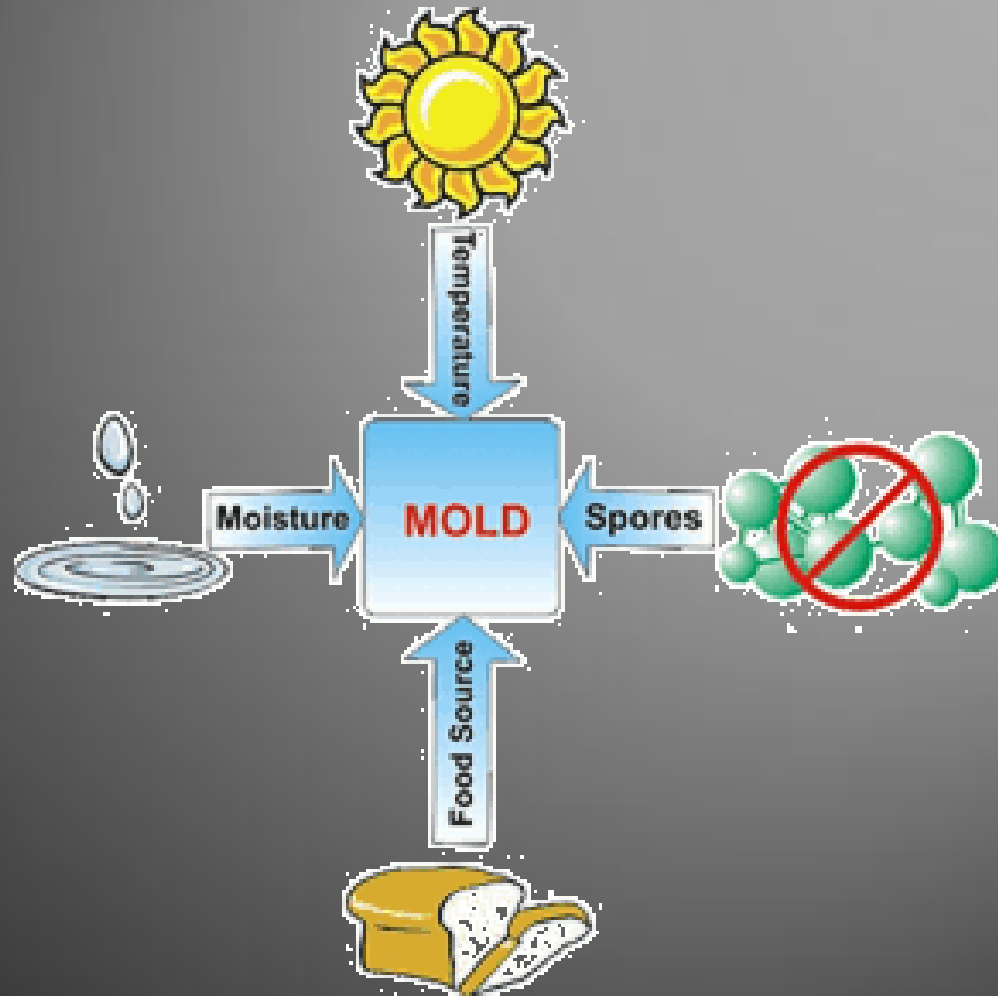
# Mold Remediation



▶ Air & Surface Disinfection is a reputable company in the Tampa Bay, FL area who follows EPA standards and guidelines to remove toxic molds, allergies, viruses, germs, bacteria, and odors from your home so that you can breathe easier.

*“Listen--are you breathing just a little, and calling it a life?” ~Mary Oliver*

# Mold Prevention Tips







## Test for Water Leaks >>

The best way to get rid of mold in your home is to prevent it!

# Check for Water Leaks

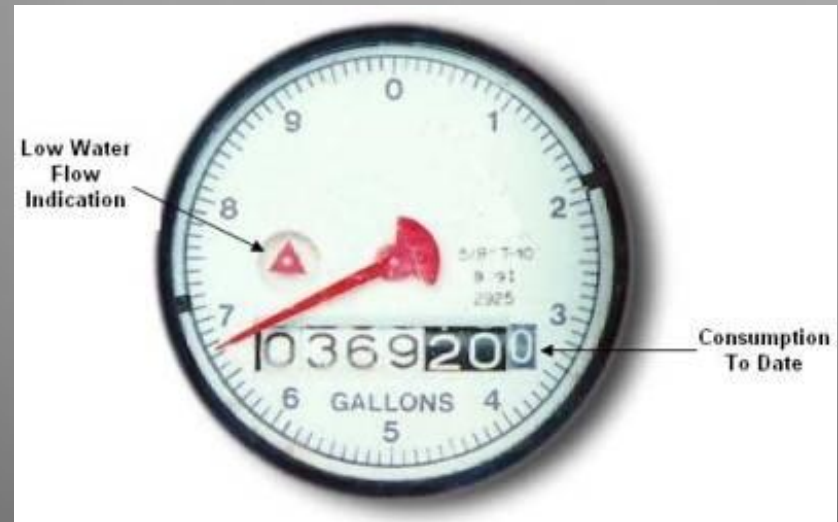


- ▶ First, locate your meter box, which is generally located in front of your home in a direct line with the main outside faucet.
- ▶ Turn all water–using appliances off so that no water is being used. This means turning off all water inside and outside the house including showers, sinks, washing machines, ice makers and any appliance that uses water.
- ▶ Carefully remove the meter box lid. The small pointer or dial near the center of the meter is the flow indicator and should not move if you are not using any water inside or outside the home. **If the flow indicator is moving, you may have a leak.**



# Leak Detection Investigation

- ▶ Below are instructions on how to check your meter to find out how much water is being lost due to a leak.
- ▶ This test should be conducted for a 30 minute period, during which time no water is being used on the property.
- ▶ Write down the numbers indicated on the meter at the start of this test.
- ▶ Return to check the meter reading after 30 minutes have passed.
- ▶ If the numbers have not changed, you do not have a leak in your pressurized water system. If the numbers have changed, contact a leak specialist to resolve the issue and save your home.



Click [here](#) to watch a video!

# Mold Prevention

- ▶ Vent appliances that produce moisture, such as clothes dryers, to the outside.
- ▶ Run the bathroom fan or open the window when showering.
- ▶ Reduce the humidity below 60 percent (ideally between 30 and 50 percent) relative humidity.
- ▶ Direct water away from your home and crawl space.
- ▶ Use air conditioners and/or de-humidifiers when needed.
- ▶ Deprive mold of moisture, warmth and food!
- ▶ Perform routine inspections using a valuable resource you **trust** to diagnose problems of your crawl space, roof, attic, and exterior.
- ▶ Use a professional service to clean the air ducts in your home.

Moisture Control

Improve Air Flow



Conclusion >>

# Breathe Better; Live Longer

- ▶ One tiny mold spore can lead into a very large and overwhelming mold industry. There are no shortcuts to tackling a mold remediation project and there should be no shortcuts to maintaining a healthy body, mind, and heart. If you are having health issues and/or concerns, examine the air you breathe first. Most insurance policies do **NOT** cover mold and/or have limitations on mold coverage. Understand these limitations and risks! It is up to each individual to be their own insurance. Less detail should be placed on home décor and more attention is crucial to the internal foundation of both your home and body for health, happiness and longevity.

