

Guidance for Remediating Building Materials with Mold Growth Caused by Clean Water

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Quantity

If the quantity of surface area effected by the mold contamination is:

Less than 150 square or linear feet – Remediation may be performed by properly trained in-house labor performing work in accordance with this guidance document.

Greater than 150 square or linear feet – Contact REHS. Evaluate the situation with a representative of REHS to determine if it is feasible to carry out the work using in-house labor or hire an outside contractor to perform the work through REHS.

REHS must be consulted prior to commencing any mold remediation work greater than 10 square or linear feet located directly within an HVAC system.

Personal Protection Equipment

Eye and hand protection is required prior to the start of any mold remediation work. When remediation work involves the removal of fiberglass or other building materials that may be an irritant to the skin, long sleeve shirts, long pants or disposable Tyvek coveralls are recommended.

Although the scope of remediation work performed by in-house labor is limited and the procedures employed should not produce a significant amount of airborne mold, individuals performing mold remediation work may elect to use an N95 particulate respirator.

Contact REHS if there is any special concerns or questions about personal protective equipment prior to the start of any remediation work.

Who Performs Work?

Each responsible department (Facilities, Utilities, Housing, etc.) shall designate who in their available labor force will be performing the remediation activities. These individuals will then be trained in the hazards associated with mold in the indoor environment and safe and proper remediation techniques. REHS will provide this training.

Work Area Containment

Full containment of a work area for in-house work will not likely be needed, but there are some precautions that will be required prior to performing actual remediation work.

For all mold remediation projects, general isolation will be required. Close all doors and restrict general access to the workspace while actual remediation is being performed. If possible, perform work during hours of minimal building occupancy, such as nights or weekends.

HVAC systems in the immediate area of the work shall be shut down and/or the HVAC returns shall be blanked off where applicable. Windows in the workspace shall be closed and any portable fans shall be turned off.

The area immediately adjacent to the remediation work should be covered with disposable polyethylene sheeting prior to the start of any work. At the completion of the work, this sheeting shall be sealed in plastic bags, taking special care to contain any debris that may have fallen on the sheeting during the remediation.

Method

Mold growth within an occupied building is indicative of a water problem. The cause of the water problem must be investigated and resolved to prevent remediating the same site multiple times. Likewise, when water is introduced into the indoor environment from such sources as a pipe leak, roof leak or flood, the effected area must be dried as soon as possible (within 24 hours) to avoid the promotion of mold growth. If porous surfaces or fabric can not be adequately dried within 24 hours of water damage, REHS recommends that the effected materials be discarded.

Once the source of the water problem is understood and eliminated, several methods for remediating visible mold growth are possible. Each individual situation will dictate which method is most appropriate.

As appropriate and possible -

Method 1 = Wet Vacuum, steam cleaning may be an alternative for carpets and upholstery.

Method 2 = Damp Wipe, with plain water or with water/detergent solution, scrub as necessary.

Method 3 = HEPA Vacuum, on thoroughly dry surfaces. Dispose of HEPA contents in well-sealed plastic bag.

Method 4 = Discard, seal material in plastic bag, HEPA area after material has been removed.

Generally, clean surfaces with damp cloths/mops, using a detergent solution and/or scrub brushes as necessary. HEPA vacuum surfaces when dry. Discard materials that can't be cleaned.

Sampling – Pre and Post Remediation

In most cases, REHS does not recommend sample collection and analysis when visible mold is present in an occupied building.

If mold growth is visible, then remediation should be performed. The standard for a completed remediation project will be no visible signs of mold present within the work area.

Other Questions

Once mold contaminated material has been removed and sealed in plastic bags, waste can be disposed of as regular trash. No special labeling or disposal requirements are necessary.

REHS is available for consultation or oversight on any type of mold remediation project.