

# THE SAFETY OBSERVER

Safety Information for Employees

## MOLD CLEANUP

Mold and mildew commonly occur in areas where building materials, like sheet rock, become moist or water-damaged due to excessive humidity, chronic leaks, condensation, and water infiltration or flooding. Molds, if present in a large enough quantity, may cause respiratory irritation or allergic reactions in certain susceptible individuals.

**General Clean-Up Procedures** These remediation procedures are applicable to surfaces affected with mold less than 10 square feet, and for damage caused by clean water.

- Wear rubber or vinyl gloves when handling moldy materials.
- Wear appropriate clothing, shoes, eye protection, and possibly a N-95 respirator during cleanup of the area.
- Turn off all HVAC equipment.
- Exercise caution around any electrical equipment or fixtures, especially if water leaks are involved. Turn off electrical breakers as necessary in wet areas.
- Make sure work areas are well ventilated when using bleach or other disinfecting or cleaning products. Before using fans, use soap and water to remove surface mold.
- Read Safety Data Sheets (SDS's) for cleaning products to avoid unsafe chemical exposures.
- Wipe or scrub all non-porous surfaces with a mild detergent and clean water to remove loose mold.
- Use a stiff brush or cleaning pad with detergent on all uneven surfaces.
- At completion, rinse all surfaces clean with water. Use a wet/dry vacuum if necessary.
- Steam cleaning may be necessary for upholstered items and carpets.
- Never mix ammonia with bleach.
- Let dry overnight. Use dehumidifiers if possible.
- Remove and discard all porous or cellulose materials (e.g., wallboard, ceiling tiles, papers/books) that appear to have mold on them in a well-sealed plastic bag.
- If important papers contain mold, make copies and discard the contaminated originals.
- HEPA vacuum the entire work area at completion. (HEPA vacuums are available at hardware/home center type stores and appliance rental stores.) Dispose of HEPA vacuum contents in a well-sealed plastic bag.
- Wash hands thoroughly and HEPA vacuum all clothes during any breaks and at completion of the clean-up project.