

FIRST
NATIONS
OCCUPANTS'
GUIDE
TO
MOLD.



 Indian and Northern Affairs Canada / Affaires Indiennes et du Nord Canadien
 Health Canada / Santé Canada



HOME TO CANADIANS
Canada

Mold can cause allergies. It can make it hard for some people to breathe. Mold can make it harder for your body to fight off infections. Mold can even cause serious illness.

Mold can grow in your house. You can prevent it from growing. If you have a little mold in your house, you can clean it up.

This pamphlet tells you:

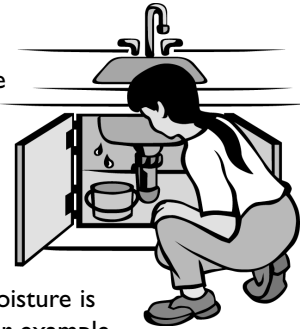
- how to prevent mold from growing;
- how to find out if mold is growing in your house; and
- how to clean up small amounts of mold.

How to prevent mold from growing

Mold needs moisture to grow. Controlling the moisture and keeping the house dry prevents the growth of mold.

Check your house for signs of moisture or molds. Find out if water is coming in from the outside or if lots of moisture is produced inside the house.

Check your house foundation, walls and roof for leaks. Check for plumbing leaks. If you find any, fix them.



Think of the different ways moisture is produced inside the house (for example, cooking, bathing). Remove the moisture as it is produced by opening a window or using exhaust fans.

Reduce the amount of stored materials, especially items that are no longer used. Fabrics, paper, wood and practically anything collect dust and hold moisture.

Mold-proofing your house, room-by-room

Basement or crawl space

- Get rid of clothes, paper and furniture stored in the basement. Keep only the items you can wash. Throw out wet and badly damaged or musty smelling materials. Keep the basement tidy so air can move around more easily.



- Store firewood in a shed or garage, not inside the house.
- Avoid having carpets on the basement floor.
- Periodically clean the drain in your basement floor. Use half a cup of bleach, let it stand for a few minutes, then flush with plenty of water. Keep the drain trap filled with water.
- A dehumidifier helps to reduce moisture in the basement during the warmer months. Close the basement windows when the dehumidifier is running.
- Avoid standing water. Keep your sump pit covered. Use a piece of metal or you can make a good cover by wrapping plywood in plastic.

Furnace

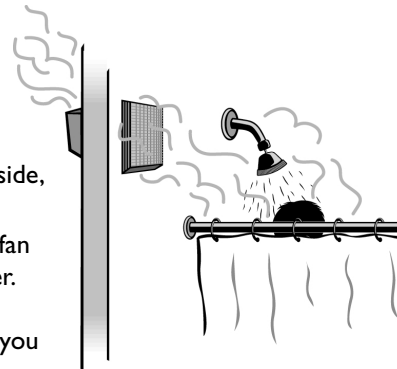
- Regularly clean and replace the furnace filters. Use a pleated, one-inch filter, not a coarse filter.
- If you have a *heat recovery ventilator* (HRV), clean the filter inside the HRV often.
- If you notice mold or signs of dampness, such as water on your windows or wet spots elsewhere, do not humidify. Disconnect furnace humidifiers that are no longer used.

Laundry

- Connect your clothes dryer to an exhaust ducted to the outside.
- Remove lint every time you use the dryer.
- Avoid hanging laundry indoors to dry.
- Dry your laundry tub and washing machine after you use them.

Bathroom

- Check the bathroom fan to make sure it exhausts to the outside, not to your attic.
- Turn the bathroom fan on when you shower. Keep it running for a few minutes after you finish your shower.
- Take short showers if possible.
- Keep surfaces that get wet, such as the walls around the bathtub and shower, clean and dry.



- If there is a carpet in your bathroom, remove it.
- Keep drains in good shape by removing debris from them. To clean a drain
 - pour a handful of baking soda into it
 - add a cup of vinegar
 - put the plug in the drain
 - let the vinegar and baking soda work for about 20 minutes
 - run fresh water into the drain.
 - if the drain is still plugged, use a small plumbing snake to unplug it.

Kitchen

- If the fan over your stove exhausts outside, use it when you cook.



- Minimize prolonged boiling.
- Keep your drains in good shape. Follow the steps in the Bathroom section, above.

- There's a drip pan at the back of your refrigerator. Pull the refrigerator out to clean the drip pan. At the same time, vacuum dust from the coils at the back of the refrigerator.

- Check under the kitchen sink to make sure there are no leaks.
- Take out the garbage daily to prevent odours and spoiling.

Closets and bedrooms

- Get rid of clothes or other stored items that you don't use. Keeping your closets and bedrooms tidy makes it easier for air to circulate and harder for mold to grow.

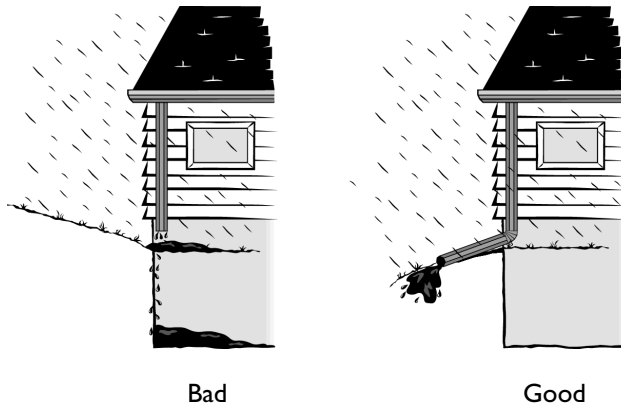
Other parts of the house

- When family and friends come into the house, have them take off their shoes.
- Vacuum often. If you are buying a vacuum cleaner, try to get one with a HEPA (**H**igh **E**fficiency **P**articulate **A**ir) filter. A HEPA vacuum cleaner is more efficient in removing small particles of dust and molds.

- Clean hard floors with a damp mop.
- Remove unnecessary furniture that collects dust.
- Do not bring furniture that has been stored in a moldy place into your house.
- Cut down the number of potted plants in the house—soil is a good place for mold.

Outside the house

- Install downspout extensions to take rainwater and melted snow away from the house.
- Make sure that eavestroughs, downspouts and downspout extensions are connected and working.
- Grade the soil so the ground slopes away from the house.
- Fix problems as quickly as possible.



Bad

Good

How to tell if there is mold in your house

Mold grows in damp places. The best places to look for mold are the basement, under or behind stored items, under the kitchen or bathroom sink, on the wall or floor next to the bathtub, at the bottom edge of windows or in closets.

Mold can be black, white or almost any colour. It often looks like a stain or smudge. It may smell musty.

To find out if a stain or a smudge is mold, carefully dab the mark with a drop of household chlorine bleach. If the colour of the stain or smudge changes or disappears, it is probably a mold.

How to clean up small mold areas

Mold areas less than the size of a standard garbage bag folded in half are considered small. You can clean small areas yourself. For moldy areas that are larger, consult your housing department.

Wear rubber gloves, glasses or safety goggles, a dust mask and a shirt with long sleeves.

Washable surfaces:

- scrub with a detergent solution; then
- sponge with a clean, wet rag and dry quickly.

Moldy drywall:

- clean the surface with a damp rag using baking soda or a bit of detergent. Do not allow the drywall to get too wet.



If mold comes back after cleaning, or you think your house has lots of mold, contact your housing department for more information.

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