



Mold Prevention

EPIC Fact Sheet

Prevent mold by controlling water intrusion

General Information:

- Molds are microscopic fungi that can release millions of spores when disturbed.
- Mold develops when it has access to water and food.
 - Food for mold can be in the form of
 - Paper, including drywall
 - Wood
 - Dust accumulation
 - Leaf litter
 - Organic films such as oil on kitchen and garage surfaces
 - Water can originate from
 - Water leaks and flooding
 - High humidity conditions
 - Spray / mist from decorative fountains and cooling towers
 - Condensation on cold surfaces

Recommendations:

- Mold prevention mainly comes from moisture management.
- Regular maintenance and inspection of plumbing and other water sources are key to prevention or early identification of water incursions, such as leaks.
- Regularly check for potential water intrusion from outdoor irrigation.
- Water resistant and water repellent are different than waterproof. Waterproof is impervious to water and thus is the best of all building materials and sealants.
- Reduce clutter in high risk areas to facilitate monitoring efforts.
- Regular cleaning of surfaces in humid environments can prevent mold growth by removing dust and organic films molds can use as nutrients.
- Beware of condensation from cold air exhausting on nearby surfaces, uninsulated coolant lines single pane windows, materials above stoves and such that can reach the dew point and accumulate liquid water from ambient water vapor.

- Use water resistant or water tolerant building materials in areas of high humidity / high water usage such as kitchen dishwashing stations. Drywall WILL get and stay wet even if you protect it with FRP or ceramic tile!
- Even a small amount of mold can release millions of spores; professional remediation is often necessary to safely remove mold growth greater than a few square feet. Regardless of size, mold remediation should always implement dust control measures.

	
Mold growing around ice from faulty coolant line. (Photo by Clark Seif Clark, Inc.)	Severe mold growth following flooding during vacation leave. (Photo by Clark Seif Clark, Inc.)
	
Mold growth on ceiling with FRP board due to condensation and accumulated dust. (Photo by Clark Seif Clark, Inc.)	A common sight: mold growth behind a kitchen dishwashing area with FRP protected drywall. (Photo by Clark Seif Clark, Inc.)

Resources to Learn More:

- EPA “Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings”
 - <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2014-08/documents/moldremediation.pdf>
- EPA guidance on mold exposure and remediation
 - <https://www.epa.gov/mold>
- OSHA guidance on mold exposure and remediation
 - <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/molds/standards.html>
- IICRC publication S520:” Standard and Guide for Professional Mold Remediation”
- CDC guidance on mold exposure and remediation
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/mold/default.htm>
- AIHA guidance on mold exposure and remediation
 - <https://www.aiha.org/public-resources/consumer-resources/disaster-response-resource-center/mold-resource-center>

The Disaster Ready Emergency Preparedness Infection Control (DR EPIC) program provides education and technical assistance for skilled nursing providers throughout the state. Individual providers will need to exercise their independent discretion in how to apply this information and technical assistance to the unique operation of each facility. For that reason, a facility’s exercise of its professional judgment and due diligence in utilizing the program for infection control and risk management practices is solely within the facility’s control for which it is entirely responsible.

- Additional DR EPIC resources (videos, FAQs, Helpline email and phone number)
 - If you have additional questions:
 - Send an email to the Emergency Preparedness Infection Control (EPIC) at EPIC@AZHCA.org, or leave a message at 602-241-4644
 - Visit the EPIC Web Resource Pages at epic.disasterreadyaz.org