



PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

Central Michigan District Health Department
"Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities"

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To: Local Newspapers

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RE: Mold in Your Home

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Mold in Your Home

Mold is everywhere – both indoors and outdoors. Mold can enter your home through various ways: doorways, windows, vents, heating and air conditioning systems. Mold can be carried indoors from the outside air by attaching itself to clothing, shoes, bags, and pets.

Mold grows in places where there is moisture, such as around leaks in roofs, windows, or pipes where there has been flooding. Mold grows well on cardboard, ceiling tiles, paper products and wood products. Mold can also grow in dust, paint, wallpaper, insulation, drywall, carpet, fabric and upholstery.

Mold growth, which usually looks like spots, can smell musty and can be many different colors. A health risk may be present, if you can see or smell (musty or earthy odor) mold. To find mold growths, you may need to look underneath flooring, behind furniture, near stored items or you may need to make an opening in a wall. If mold is present, no matter what type it is, you need to clean up the mold and fix the moisture problem. Mold growth can be removed from hard surfaces with commercial products, soap and water, or a bleach solution of no more than 1 cup of bleach in one gallon of water.

It is not recommended that you have mold testing done in your home. Tests can be expensive and are not useful in determining mold related health risks. Because mold spores are everywhere around us, mold testing results can be very difficult to interpret and often do not help with mold removal efforts. The best practice is to remove mold and prevent future growth.

You can control mold growth in your home by:

*Keep the humidity level in your home between 40% and 60%. Use an air conditioner or a dehumidifier during humid months and in damp spaces like basements.

*Be sure your home has enough ventilation. Use exhaust fans which vent outside your home in the kitchen and bathroom. Make sure your clothes dryer vents to the outside of your home.

*Fix any leaks in your home's roof, walls or plumbing so mold does not have moisture to grow.

*Clean up and dry out your home thoroughly and quickly (within 24-48 hours) after flooding.

*Add mold inhibitors to paints before painting.

*Clean bathrooms with mold-killing products.

*Remove or replace carpets and upholstery that have been soaked and cannot be dried promptly. Consider not using carpet in rooms or areas like bathrooms or basements that may have a lot of moisture.

*To learn more about preventing mold in your home, see the Environmental Protection Agency's publication "A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture, and Your Home" at <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/moldguide.html>

Remember that small amounts of mold in your home usually will not cause health problems. However, extensive indoor mold can be harmful to your health. If you would like more information on mold, its health concerns or how to remove it from your home, please visit the following websites:

- Michigan Department of Community Health Toxics and Health hotline and website: 1-800-648-6942, www.michigan.gov/mdch-toxics
- Your local public health department, find it at <http://www.malph.org/page.cfm/108/>
- Center for Disease Control: <http://www.cdc.gov/mold/>
- National Center for Housing and the Environment: <http://www.stopmold.org/>

This article was brought to you by the staff at Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves residents in the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon. Visit our website www.cmdhd.org

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