

In Your Home



Tips to Preventing Mold

Now that we know how and why mold grows, let's dive into some tips to help you prevent it from growing in your home!

1 - **Keeping Humidity Down**, especially in high humidity areas like basements and bathrooms will drastically help alleviate chances of mold growth. Purchasing a dehumidifier for basements or an air conditioner for bedrooms and living spaces will help keep humidity levels low. Humidity levels in your home shouldn't be any higher than 50%.

2 - **Air Flowing** freely in your home is key in preventing moisture build up. Turn on your exhaust fan when in the bathroom and oven fan when cooking. Also check your venting in your attic and make sure things like your dryer and exhaust fans are vented to the outside and isn't building up moisture in your attic. Check that your attic itself is properly vented as well. Since warm air holds more moisture and spring is now here, it's a great idea to have free flowing air in your house. Open all the doors and windows on nice days to get optimal air flow.

3 - **Identify and Correct Problem Areas** such as damaged gutters or leaking roofs and windows. Things like these are a huge cause of water damage, and we know what water can cause. Proper grading around your home is also key. Make sure water runs away from your home. Waterproofing and excavating may cost some money, but in the end, it will prevent a lot of water problems. Also remember that slow leaks are an almost guaranteed cause of mold, more so than getting a significant amount of water at once. Check leaky faucets, water lines to the fridge and dishwasher. What about the roof; are holes properly fixed?

Causes Of Mold

In order to understand how to prevent mold growth in your home, we first need to get to know the reasons why it grows in the first place. There are six main reasons that cause mold to grow; moisture, a food source, oxygen supply, lack of sunlight, optimal growing temperature and existing mold spores.

All of these causes may be present in your home, or just a few, however knowing them will help you prevent mold growth in the future. Mold grows in areas with elevated relative humidity. When a surface, or food source, such as wood, sheetrock, clothing, or any other porous material, comes into contact with water or high humidity levels, it creates a perfect breeding ground for mold. Add in environmental factors such as lack of sunlight, temperature and air flow and you have the perfect space for mold to cozy on up and flourish.

Since mold has a stacking effect, which is the natural vertical airflow in a home (the same reason why a chimney works), spring time is a perfect time of year for mold to grow. As temperatures warm up, warm air enters basements and crawl spaces



which cause humidity levels to rise. As humidity levels rise and push up through your home with the stacking effect, it results in condensation which drives mold growth.

Prevention is always key in any situation. Knowing how to prevent mold growth will not only save you a headache, but potentially thousands of dollars! Read our tips so you can beat out humidity and stay on top of any problems that may arise.



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