

**A Course on
Mold –**

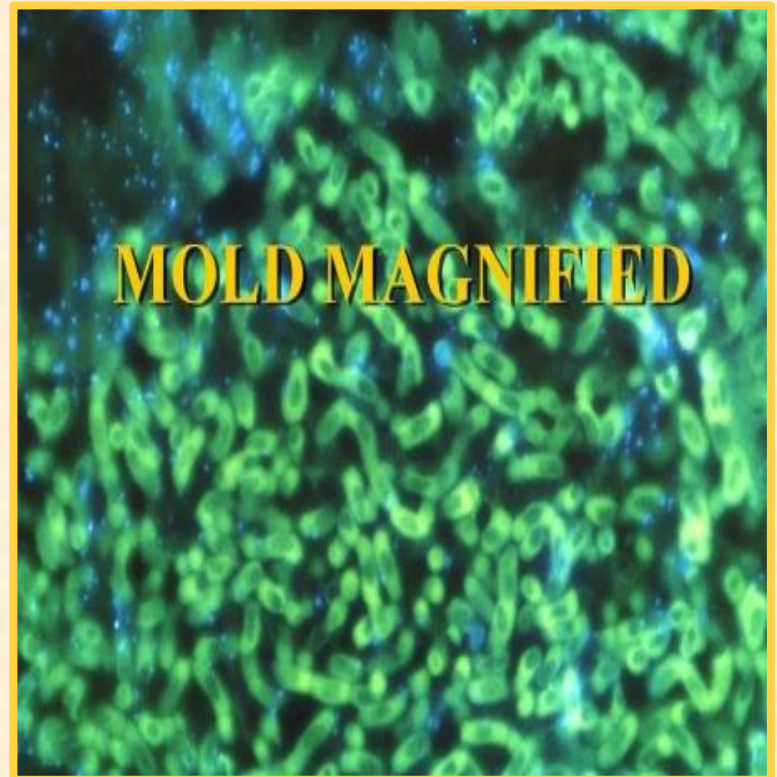
**The Facts
About Mold**

Module 1

The focus of this course

Welcome to the four-part course on mold. In this first module the focus is on the facts about mold. The focus will be in 3 areas:

1. To provide the basic facts about mold in homes – a checklist for finding mold
2. To provide information on the health risks of mold
3. To provide information on when to call in a professional, and who to call



Module 1

The presence of mold

Mold and bacteria can manifest anywhere. The source can be caused by improper construction, lack of maintenance, or just bad luck! As long as the moisture and temperature level are right, mold can sprout and spread in 2 - 3 days after initial occurrence; resulting in potential infestation.



Module 1

Indoor inspection checklist

- Is there a musty, or odd smell?
- Are there any visible signs of water damage?
- Are there signs of roof or plumbing leaks, or sewer overflow?
- Has the home ever experienced other water problems?
- Do you clean surfaces, only to have stains return?
- When using air conditioning, does the air feel cold or damp? Or, does the air feel warm and moist? [Hint: either is a problem]



Module 1

Checking the basement

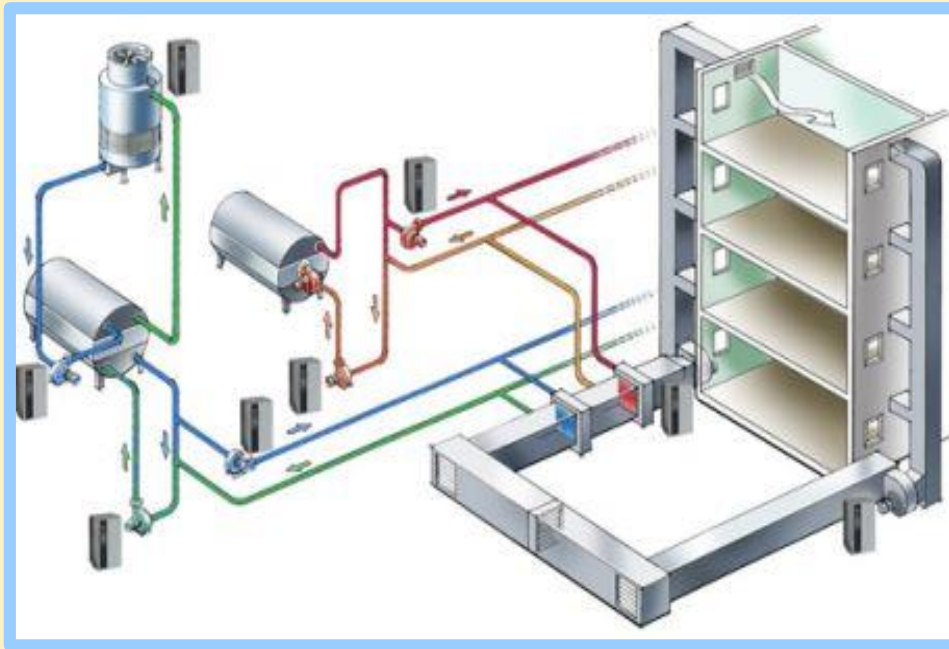
- Do you have any musty odors?
- Do the walls, floors and ceilings have any visible signs of cracks or stains?
- Are there any suspicious growths?



Module 1

Checking the HVAC

- Do you have a routine maintenance program?
- Are your supply air vents clean with no signs of rust, dust or mold?
- Do your supply air vents condense or have droplets of water on them?
- Do you have a supply air vent under a cabinet (toe vent)?



Module 1

Checking kitchens & ceilings

- Do cabinets show signs of mold growing on them?
- Are there any leaks or water stains under the sink?
- Are there any spots or stains on the ceilings?



Module 1

Checking laundry rooms & attics

- Is the caulking around the tub, shower, and sink present and clean?
- For tiled floors, is the grout properly set and you have repaired any loose or damaged tile?
- Any signs of leaks or stains underneath the sink?
- Does your attic have any musty odors, leaks from the roof or visible signs of mold?



Module 1

Checking living rooms

- Is there any water damage or moisture in or around the fireplace?
- Is there any rippling in the carpet or cupping of hardwood floors?
- Do you have any dark spots around the edges of your carp?
- Does the humidity within your bathroom seem high?



Module 1

The outdoors

Now, you will proceed to check the outdoor environment.



Module 1

Checking the foundation

- Do you see water pools or excessive moisture in the crawlspace?
- Are gardens, trees, and bushes planted against the home? *All three will draw water into your*
- *home via their roots.*
- Do you see brown surface mold or a different color substance on the wood in the crawlspace?



Module 1

Checking the outside

- Do you have any evidence of pooling water on the ground outside your home?
- Are there any signs of wood rot or decay around windows or doors?
- Do you see any water stains or other signs of moisture?
- Are any seals broken?



Module 1

Checking the roof & faucets

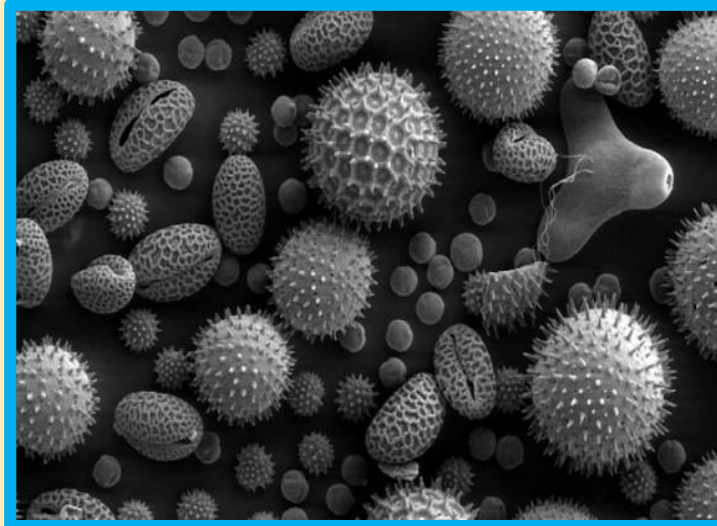
- Is water directed away from the home?
- Are all outside faucets secured properly to hoses and not leaking?
- Do you have any missing shingles?



Module 1

Mold & health problems?

Molds are usually not a problem indoors, unless mold spores land on a wet or damp spot and begin growing. Molds have the potential to cause health problems. Molds produce allergens (substances that can cause allergic reactions), irritants, and in some cases, potentially toxic substances (mycotoxins).

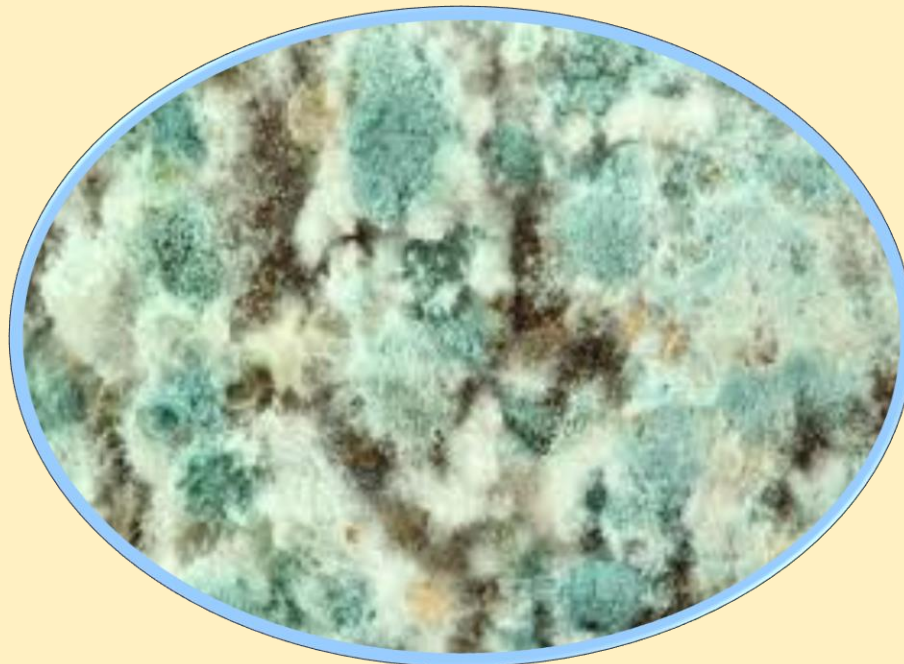


Mold spores

Module 1

If someone inhales mold

Inhaling or touching mold or mold spores may cause allergic reactions in sensitive individuals. Allergic responses can include hay fever-type symptoms, such as sneezing, runny nose, red eyes, and skin rash (dermatitis).



Module 1

Mold & allergic reactions

Allergic responses include hay fever-type symptoms, such as sneezing, runny nose, red eyes, and skin rash (dermatitis). They can be immediate or delayed.



Module 1

Health issues & mold

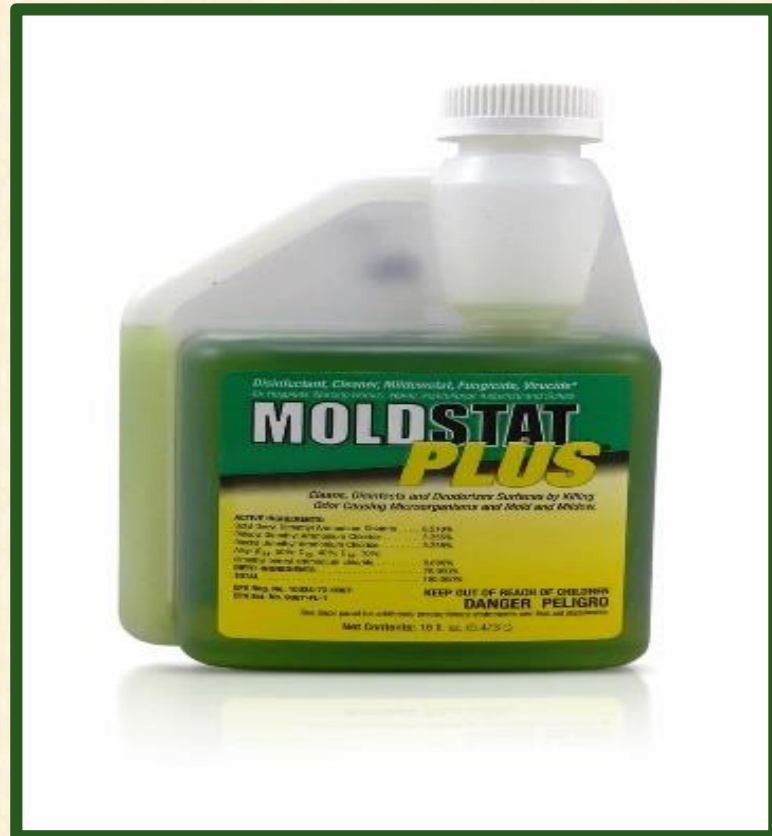
Molds can also cause asthma attacks in people with asthma who are allergic to mold. In addition, mold exposure can irritate the eyes, skin, nose, throat, and lungs of both mold-allergic and non-allergic people. Symptoms other than the allergic and irritant types are not commonly reported as a result of inhaling mold.



Module 1

Why you should do something

If there is mold growth in your home, you must clean up the mold and fix the water problem. If you clean up the mold, but don't fix the water problem, then, most likely, the mold problem will come back.



Module 1

Act immediately

If you have a mold problem, ACT QUICKLY. Mold damages what it grows on. The longer it grows, the more damage it will cause.



Module 1

What to do & when

The way to deal with mold depends on the size of the problem.



Module 1

Small problems

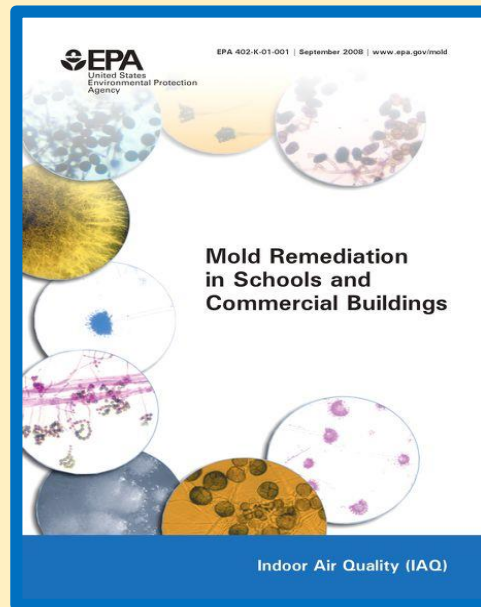
If the moldy area is less than about 10 square feet (less than roughly a 3 ft. by 3 ft. patch), in most cases, you can handle the job yourself.



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Large problems

If there has been a lot of water damage, and/or mold growth covers more than 10 square feet, consult the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guide: *Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings*. The good news is this document is applicable to other building types. It is available on the Internet at: www.epa.gov/mold.



Module 1

Hire a contractor

If you choose to hire a contractor (or other professional service provider) to do the cleanup, make sure the contractor has experience cleaning up mold. Check references and ask the contractor to follow the recommendations in EPA's Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings the guidelines of the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH), or other guidelines from professional or government organizations.



The Facts About Mold

The End of Module 1