



Moisture Control & Mold Prevention Informational Sheet

- What does mold need to grow?
 - Food
 - Any biological or carbon-based life form (dust, paper, wood, drywall etc.)
 - Water
 - Liquid water
 - Elevated relative humidity (>70%)
 - Oxygen
 - If one variable is removed or controlled, then mold growth should not occur
- Water vapor enters buildings through two main mechanisms
 - Vapor Diffusion
 - Air Infiltration
- Primary moisture sources in schools are typically related to poorly managed rainwater/groundwater, plumbing leaks, condensation on surfaces, damp earth in crawlspaces, and construction moisture such as concrete, gypsum mud/joint compound
- How to identify moisture issues?
 - Visual identification
 - Custodial staff during routine daily activities
 - Informing staff to report issues they identify
 - Odor concerns
 - Identify possible moisture issues in areas where odors are reported
 - Look for excessive use of fragranced products (used to cover up odors)
 - Use common sense
 - Touch or feel components, drains, and supply lines for leaks
 - Fix leaks/moisture issues immediately
 - Temporary measures may be used
- How should the district respond to mold contamination?
 - Identify
 - Extent of moisture damage and contamination
 - Dynamics of moisture sources
 - Dry the wet areas in the short term
 - Discard or decontaminate contaminated material
 - Design
 - Long term intervention in the moisture dynamics
 - Fungal clean-up procedures and clearance criteria
 - Implement repairs and program changes to prevent future problems
 - See EPA Guidance mold remediation guidelines
- Each district needs to have an established process for identifying, drying, and resolving moisture issues
 - Key components of this process should include:

- Who's responsible for what?
 - What steps should be taken to resolve issues?
 - What steps should be taken to dry wetted areas?
 - Restore conditions to original state?
 - QC or verification of issue resolution?
- If the area is less than 10 square feet – clean it up
 - Use detergent and hot water
 - Assorted brushes, rags, and buckets
 - Two bucket cleaning system
 - Do not use high pressure sprayers
 - Make sure PPE is worn
- If the area is over 10 square feet
 - Respirator
 - P100 or P95 filter
 - Eye protection
 - Rubber gloves
 - Coveralls
 - Remove/bag them before you leave the work area
 - Containment
 - See EPA Guidance
- How to minimize moisture issues
 - Maintain relative humidity levels in the facility between 30%-50%
 - Control dust mite populations
 - Dehumidifiers may be required in problem areas
 - Routinely monitor the facility for moisture leaks or intrusion issues
 - System in place for staff to report issues
 - If issues can be resolved and wetted materials dried within 48 hours, no mold growth should occur
 - Develop routine schedules for inspections and maintenance of facility
 - HVAC systems
 - Plumbing systems
 - Roof and building exterior

