

Humidity levels can be measured by hygrometers, which are available at local hardware stores.

- Place or adjust outside gutters and drains so that water does not collect near the outside walls. Check gutters and drains regularly to avoid clogs. Place lawn sprinkler systems so that they do not soak outside walls.

HOW DO I CLEAN UP MOLD?

- The source of the water problem must first be corrected. All roof or plumbing leaks/flooding must be fixed.
- All moldy surfaces should be cleaned with a household bleach (like Clorox) and water mix = 1 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water. You can add a little dish soap to the bleach water to cut dirt and oil on the wall that can hold mold. With good ventilation, apply the bleach water mix to the surface with a sponge, let it sit for 15 minutes, then thoroughly dry the surface. ***Be sure to wear a dust mask, rubber gloves and open lots of windows when cleaning with bleach water. Persons with any respiratory health problems (e.g. asthma, emphysema) should not perform the clean up.*** Keep safety in mind.

For more information on mold or indoor air pollutants contact:

*Environmental Protection Agency
2890 Woodbridge Avenue
Edison, New Jersey 08837
Tel. 908-246-1739 or
Web address: www.epa.gov*

Frequently Asked Questions ABOUT Mold



Monmouth County Health Department
3435 Highway 9
Freehold, New Jersey 07728
Tel: 732-431-7456
Web address:
www.visitmonmouth.com/health

WHAT IS MOLD?

MOLD is a type of fungus. It grows on surfaces in masses of branching threads, which resemble dense cobwebs. Active mold can be any color, depending on the species.

WHERE CAN MOLDS BE FOUND?

Molds can be found almost anywhere: they can grow on virtually any substance when moisture is present. Molds reproduce by forming tiny spores just as plants produce seeds. When mold spores land on a damp spot indoors, they may begin growing and digesting whatever they are growing on in order to survive. There are molds that can grow on wood, paper, carpet or food. When excessive moisture or water accumulates indoors, mold growth will often occur, particularly if the moisture problem remains undiscovered.

HOW CAN MOLDS AFFECT MY HEALTH?

The most common types of mold are generally not hazardous to healthy individuals. However, people who have asthma, hay fever, or other allergies or have weakened immune systems are more likely to react to mold.

WHAT IS STACHYBOTRYS CHARTARUM?

Stachybotrys chartarum (also known as *Stachybotrys atra*) is one mold that is associated with health effects in people. It is greenish-black in color and tends to grow on material with a high cellulose content (such as drywall sheetrock, dropped ceiling tiles and wood) that become chronically moist or water damaged, due to excessive humidity, water leaks, condensation, or flooding.

HOW CAN I TELL IF THIS TYPE OF MOLD IS PRESENT IN MY HOME?

Many molds are black in appearance but are not *Stachybotrys Chartarum* for example, the black mold commonly found between bathroom tiles. *Stachybotrys Chartarum* can only be positively identified through microscopic exam or by specially trained professionals.

HOW CAN STACHYBOTRYS CHARTARUM AFFECT YOUR HEALTH?

There has been some evidence linking the *Stachybotrys* mold with pulmonary hemosiderosis, a condition that causes bleeding in the lungs of infants generally less than six months old. This is a very rare

condition. In cases of hemosiderosis, the exposure to *Stachybotrys Chartarum* came from highly contaminated dwellings, where the infants were continually exposed over a long period of time.

HOW CAN I ELIMINATE MOLD FROM MY HOME?

There is no practical way to eliminate all mold and mold spores in the indoor environment; the way to control indoor mold growth is to control moisture.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN BE TAKEN TO CONTROL MOLD?

- ❑ Wash mold off hard surfaces and dry completely. Absorbent materials, such as ceiling tiles and carpet, may have to be replaced if they are contaminated with mold.
- ❑ Fix leaky plumbing or other sources of water.
- ❑ Keep drip pans in your air conditioner, refrigerator, and dehumidifier clean and dry.
- ❑ Use exhaust fans or open windows in kitchens and bathrooms when showering, cooking, or using the dishwasher.
- ❑ Vent clothes dryers to the outside.
- ❑ Maintain low indoor humidity, ideally between 30-50% relative humidity.



**FUNGUS AND MOLD IDENTIFICATION
SUBMISSION FORM**

Plant Diagnostic Laboratory
Rutgers NJAES
PO Box 550
Milltown, NJ 08850-0550
www.njaes.rutgers.edu/services

Submitter _____

Address _____

Zip _____ County _____

Phone _____

Fax # _____

E-mail _____

DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION - Complete as thoroughly as possible.

Sample ID: _____

Date Collected: _____

Location:

cropland

park / utility turf

nursery

orchard

greenhouse

vineyard

sports turf

other _____

forested site

industrial landscape

warehouse

home landscape or lawn

home garden

home exterior (please explain) _____

home interior (please explain) _____

Office Use Only

Lab # _____

Date _____

Received by _____

Chk# _____

Amt. _____

METHOD OF PAYMENT:

Bill me (commercial clients only)

Cash Check or Money Order

Credit Card



Credit Card No. _____

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Exp. Date - Zip Code _____

Signature: _____



Do you need other information or management recommendations for this problem?

Yes

No

Please specify _____

I. SAMPLING:

a) **Indoor fungus/mold:**

Bulk sample: Collect bulk samples by cutting out pieces of the contaminated building material with a utility knife or saw. A 5" x 5" piece of the material is plenty. Place the sample in a resealable storage bag. Be aware that the sample is only representative of the area where it was collected, so several may be necessary. Be sure to accurately identify the location of each sample. **A bulk sample is best for our laboratory because it allows us to select our own sub-sample for culturing.**

Surface sample: Surface sampling can be done in two ways: by vacuuming the particles onto a filter paper, or by wiping the fungus with cotton swabs. To vacuum the spores, place a cellulose thimble filter on the intake hose before the catch bag. (This does not require a special vacuum cleaner.) After the mold is vacuumed, place the thimble filter in a sealed bag and send it to the lab. For swabbing, wipe the mold with moist cotton swabs. Place the swabs in a small plastic container or bag and send them to the lab. Be sure to accurately identify the location of each sample.

b) **Outdoor fungus/mold:**

Wrap the fungus in newspaper or paper towels and place in a sturdy container to prevent damage. **DO NOT** wrap in foil or plastic since this will cause the sample to decay quickly.

II. PACKING/SHIPPING:

a) Select a strong container, such as a corrugated box or mailing tube, that will not crush in transit.

b) Mail samples early in the week. Samples mailed on Thursday or Friday generally remain in the post office over the weekend where high temperatures can stimulate decay.

c) Complete and enclose this sample submission form and the appropriate payment (see below) for each sample to be analyzed. Make checks or money orders payable to **Rutgers, The State University**. See reverse for credit card payment. (Fees are subject to change.)

III. PAYMENT: All fees are per sample. In-state microscope identification.....\$50
Out-of-state microscope identification.....\$100

IV. MAILING ADDRESS: Be sure to use appropriate address to help ensure timely delivery.

U.S. POSTAL SERVICE only:
Plant Diagnostic Laboratory
Rutgers NJAES
PO Box 550
Milktown, NJ 08850-0550

Physical address for
OTHER DELIVERY SERVICES only:
Plant Diagnostic Laboratory
Rutgers NJAES
Ralph Geiger Turfgrass Education Center
20 Indyk-Engel Way
North Brunswick, NJ 08902