7 MINUTE Safety Trainer Mold Remediation

GOALS

This safety session should teach employees to:

- Understand the health hazards associated with mold.
- Protect themselves and building occupants while removing mold from the building.

Applicable Regulations: 29 CFR 1910.132, .133, .134, .136, .138

1. Eliminate mold with a mold remediation plan.

- Mold is a fungus that reproduces by producing tiny microscopic spores.
- Mold has been known to produce allergens and irritants that aggravate allergies and asthma.
- Mold can also produce mycotoxins causing symptoms ranging from skin rashes to cancer to central nervous system damage.
- Once mold is discovered in the workplace, the best way to remove it safely is by following a step-by-step mold remediation plan.

2. Check for water problems that cause mold.

- Identify the cause of the water problem and repair it to prevent an ongoing problem.
- If you find that the water is contaminated rather than clean, consult outside professionals. Do not attempt to clean it up yourself.

3. Investigate the mold.

- Search for any hidden mold. Worker health complaints and the smell of mold are indications that you have a hidden mold problem. Remember, exposure to mold occurs through inhalation, ingestion, and skin absorption.
- Don't touch mold with your bare hands, get it in your eyes, or breathe in mold spores. Use personal protective equipment (PPE) whenever you disturb mold.
- When investigating mold, take care not to disperse mold or mold spores into the air, where they can be inhaled by building occupants. Don't run the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system if you know or suspect that it's contaminated with mold.
- Beware when checking behind vinyl wallpaper. Removal can cause a major release of spores. Toxic molds, mold behind vinyl wallpaper, and HVAC system mold all present the possibility of significant exposures.

4. Determine the extent of the mold.

If total surface area affected is less than 10 square feet:

- Use **minimum PPE** (gloves, goggles, and an N-95 respirator) during the cleanup. No containment is needed to protect remediators and building occupants.

If total surface area affected is between 10 and 100 square feet:

- Use **limited PPE** (gloves, goggles, disposable paper overalls, and a half-face or full-face powered air-purifying respirator with a high efficiency particulate air or (HEPA) filter) or full PPE. Use limited containment with polyethylene sheeting from ceiling to floor around the affected area with a slit entry and covering flap. Maintain the area under

negative pressure with a HEPA-filtered fan unit, and block supply and return air vents within the containment area.

If total surface area affected is greater than 100 square feet (or there is significant chance for exposure):

- Use **full PPE** (long gloves, disposable head and foot coverings, a full body suit, and a full-face powered air-purifying respirator with a HEPA filter). Depending on the cleaning solution being used, choose from impermeable natural rubber, neoprene, nitrile, polyurethane, or PVC gloves.
- Use **full containment** with two layers of fire-retardant polyethylene sheeting with one airlock chamber. Maintain the area under negative pressure with a HEPA-filtered fan exhausted to the outside of the building. Block supply and return air vents within the containment area. Before leaving the airlock, place all contaminated PPE (except respirators) in a sealed bag. Wear your respirator until you are outside the decontamination chamber.

5. Remove the water and clean up the mold.

- Clean up all mold, whether dead or alive.
- Clean and dry moldy materials using wet vacuums, damp wipes with detergents, and HEPA vacuums.
- Dry nonmoldy items within 48 hours to prevent mold growth.
- Discard moldy porous items, the HEPA filter, and the contents of the vacuum in sealed plastic bags.
- Wear PPE throughout the final stages of HEPA vacuuming and damp-wiping of the containment area.
- Set up a regular schedule of inspection to prevent new mold buildup.

DISCUSSION POINTS:

Ask workers what they can do right now to fix all leaks and prevent mold from taking hold throughout the building.

CONCLUSION:

Protect yourself from mold during remediation.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:

Have your employees take the Mold Remediation quiz. By testing their knowledge, you can assess their ability to understand this health hazard and determine whether they need to review this important topic again soon.

7 MINUTE Safety Trainer

Mold Remediation

QUIZ 1352

C-1E

MOLD REMEDIATION QUIZ

1. **If mold is discovered in the workplace, you should:**
   a. Ignore it and hope it goes away.
   b. Put it at the bottom of your very long to-do list.
   c. Investigate the source of the water or moisture problem right away.

2. **The best way to eliminate mold is to:**
   a. Douse it with a bottle of bleach.
   b. Call in the hazmat team.
   c. Follow a step-by-step Mold Remediation Plan.

3. **Mold exposure occurs through which common route of exposure?**
   a. Inhalation
   b. Ingestion
   c. Skin absorption
   d. All of the above

4. **You should wear personal protective equipment (PPE) whenever you investigate mold.**
   a. True b. False

5. **When investigating mold, you should avoid disturbing it and sending spores into the air.**
   a. True b. False

6. **One way to determine how much PPE to wear is by assessing the extent of the mold damage.**
   a. True b. False

7. **The best gloves for cleaning up mold are:**
   a. Cotton gloves
   b. Rubber, neoprene, or nitrile gloves
   c. Leather gloves

8. **Containment areas help to prevent mold spores from spreading all over the building and affecting occupants.**
   a. True b. False

9. **If mold is dead, it's no longer a problem.**
   a. True b. False

10. **Moldy items that you plan to discard should be wrapped in plastic before they are removed from the containment area.**
    a. True b. False

When you have completed this quiz, turn it in to your supervisor.

Name:_____ **Date:**_____

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ANSWERS TO MOLD REMEDIATION QUIZ

1. c. Investigate the source of the water or moisture problem immediately and fix it.
2. c. Follow a step-by-step Mold Remediation Plan.
3. d. All of the above.
4. a. True. You should wear at least the minimum level of PPE to investigate mold.
5. a. True. Mold has microscopic spores. When you disturb it, spores are released into the air where building occupants can breathe them in.
6. a. True. When you evaluate the extent of the mold problem, it will give you an idea of what level of protection you'll need for PPE and containment.
7. b. Depending on the cleaning solution you use to kill the mold, choose impermeable natural rubber, neoprene, nitrile, polyurethane, or PVC gloves.
8. a. True. Containment areas contain the mold and mold spores.
9. b. False. Even dead mold can continue to cause allergic reactions. It must be cleaned up.
10. a. True. Wrap all moldy items that can't be cleaned in sealed plastic bags or wrap them in large sheets of plastic before being removing them from the containment area.