



# MOLD 101

## Risk Management & Safety Occupational Safety & Health Program

**Does your office have mold?** Have you noticed:

Stains or discoloration on your walls, ceiling, or air conditioner?

A damp or musty smell?

Water problems like a leaky roof or windows?

### What is mold?

Molds are forms of fungi that are found indoors and outdoors. You are exposed to them daily in the air you breathe. There are hundreds of thousands of different types of mold. They are living organisms that grow naturally, particularly in warm, damp, humid conditions where there is little air movement. Often called mildew," molds are related to mushrooms and yeast but are much smaller. We can only see or smell mold when there is a large quantity. Mold can grow almost anywhere: on walls, ceilings, carpets, or furniture. Humidity or wetness, caused by water leaks, spills, or condensation can cause mold growth. Mold produces "spores," tiny particles that float through the air. These spores can sometimes cause health problems. Mold does not affect everyone, and different people are affected differently when mold is breathed or inhaled. People who are allergic to mold may get watery eyes, or stuffed noses, itching, headaches and can trigger asthma attacks.

### What do I do about possible mold in my work area?

All mold spores can not be eliminated. There are no standards for how much mold can be present. Ideally there will be no visible mold growth or strong moldy odors in your work area. If you see or smell mold or if you or others are experiencing mold related physical conditions report it to Risk Management and Safety so the problem can be investigated.

### What will Risk Management and Safety do?

Risk Management and Safety will focus on identifying potential mold and the source of moisture or water intrusion, not testing for mold. A thorough investigation will hopefully reveal most sources of mold and moisture. Risk Management and Safety will then report its findings.

Risk Management and Safety will manage environmental testing if it becomes necessary however your cost center will be responsible for all associated costs.

**If you have questions or need a workplace mold assessment call:  
Risk Management and Safety, Occupational Safety and Health Program  
334-844-4805**



*Mold growing on the surface of a unit ventilator.*



*Mold growing on the back side of wallpaper.*