

MOULD IS DANGEROUS: Six Tips You Need To Know

Mould is a word no homeowner ever wants to hear. While we all know that mould is dangerous, many people have no idea what mould actually is or why it is dangerous. In this article, we highlight six methods you can use to identifying potential mould in your home. If any of these yield a potentially mouldy situation, take action right away to identify, remove and remedy the situation.

What is mould?

Mould is an extremely small, dangerous element that belongs to the family of fungi. It can thrive on almost any surface, especially cellulose-based objects. Mould reproduces very quickly, and it can take hold in your home in no time. Once mould takes over, your health and your wallet can be impacted. The sooner you identify and remediate, the lesser the impact.

Most people hear the word “mould” and cringe. They don’t realize that moulds are a normal part of our world. Moulds are present almost everywhere. Though they may be harmful at times, moulds are a big part of the ecological balance in our environment, as they play a major role in breaking down organic substances. In fact, moulds are the original recyclers.

It is only when certain types of moulds get into our homes that issues arise. Though there are thousands of different mould types, only certain kinds are dangerous for humans. Mould spores easily become airborne and when inhaled, can have major impacts on our health. Health issues range from recurring allergies to severe reactions ending in death.

Moulds require moisture to grow. There are many different types of moisture sources in our homes, and all of them can produce mould if they persist. From floods to roof leaks, moisture can come from almost anywhere. According to some recent studies,

approximately 50 percent of homes have unknown moisture problems. And as we all know, moulds thrive best in moist places. While we may notice moisture on our walls or in our bathrooms because we frequently visit these areas, mould can often hide in the areas of our homes we don't frequently visit such as basements, attics, and behind furniture.

All indoor mould growth is potentially harmful and should be removed promptly, no matter what types of mould are present.

Awareness and sanitation should be observed to prevent the spread of moulds in your home.

Here are six ways to detect dangerous moulds in your home.

1. Launch a search operation

The easiest way to detect mould is to simply look for it. Mould leaves lots of visible clues behind. Moulds are characterized by their cotton-like features that may appear in colors such as gray, white, black, or green. Black mould can be especially dangerous.

Check for any yellowing or furry-looking growth on fabrics, plasterboard -- anything that may have been exposed to moisture. Mould behind paint will produce bubbles or other deformities in the paint.

2. Use your sense of smell

Remember that smell you got the time you forgot to unpack wet gym clothes from your bag or locker? Mould typically leaves behind a distinctive odor. Whenever you smell any mouldy odors, begin your search immediately. But you also have to remember that even if your home has no mouldy smell, you may still be under its threat. Be sharp-eyed because some fragrance-free moulds are still toxic.

3. Is basement flooding one of your indoor problems?

Has your basement flooded in the past? If yes, then its likely that your house is filled with dangerous moulds. Look around your basement for indications of extra mustiness or water

damage. Even if the water was removed promptly, walls and other basement fixtures probably retained moisture -- which then, in turn, breeds mould. Mould can grow deep into plasterboard, so don't assume that mould is only on the surface.

If you have experienced basement or house flooding, check for water discolorations on walls and ceilings. Remember, moisture is the major culprit for mould exposure.

4. Windows mist over during winter

When it's cold and rainy, there is excessive moisture in the environment. This can cause fungal growth in damp areas. Even small amounts of condensation can invite excessive mould growth.

If your windows are foggy during winter, determine the source of the extra moisture, and check the area for any mould contamination.

5. Use home mould test kits

If you aren't comfortable with your visual and smell tests, mould home test kits are a great option for an inexpensive second opinion. Mould testing is used to find out any dangerous threats of moulds in your home. These do-it-yourself test kits are designed to track down the presence of harmful moulds that can trigger serious health problems. Most of these testing devices are user-friendly and can provide reliable results. However, don't skip a visual inspection of your home -- no test is 100% accurate.

There are also mould inspection professionals who can perform full home mould inspections. While it may cost more than a home test kit, you can rest assured that your results are accurate. If mould is detected in your home, the company can also provide guidance on the next steps you need to take to remove and remediate.

(We recommend AMCO ZONE – 07 5559 0790, www.amcozone.com.au.)

6. Hidden moulds

Experts agree that the most perilous mould is the one that is unseen, such as in air conditioning units, duct-work, or within walls. These moulds can swell rapidly while undetected. Usually, hidden moulds can be discerned not by eye but by stale odor or frequent need to clear your throat. Proper care and maintenance will prevent these. Be sure

to schedule routine inspections and maintenance of your entire home – taking care to include all areas that may not be seen otherwise. Mould is tricky.

The key to prevention of the threats is awareness. Be vigilant with your surroundings for any sign of mould growth. Early prevention is the best solution to mould hazards.