

Preventing & Addressing Mold/Moisture Problems in Maine Homes and Rental Properties

WHAT LANDLORDS AND OTHERS NEED TO KNOW

CHRISTY CROCKER

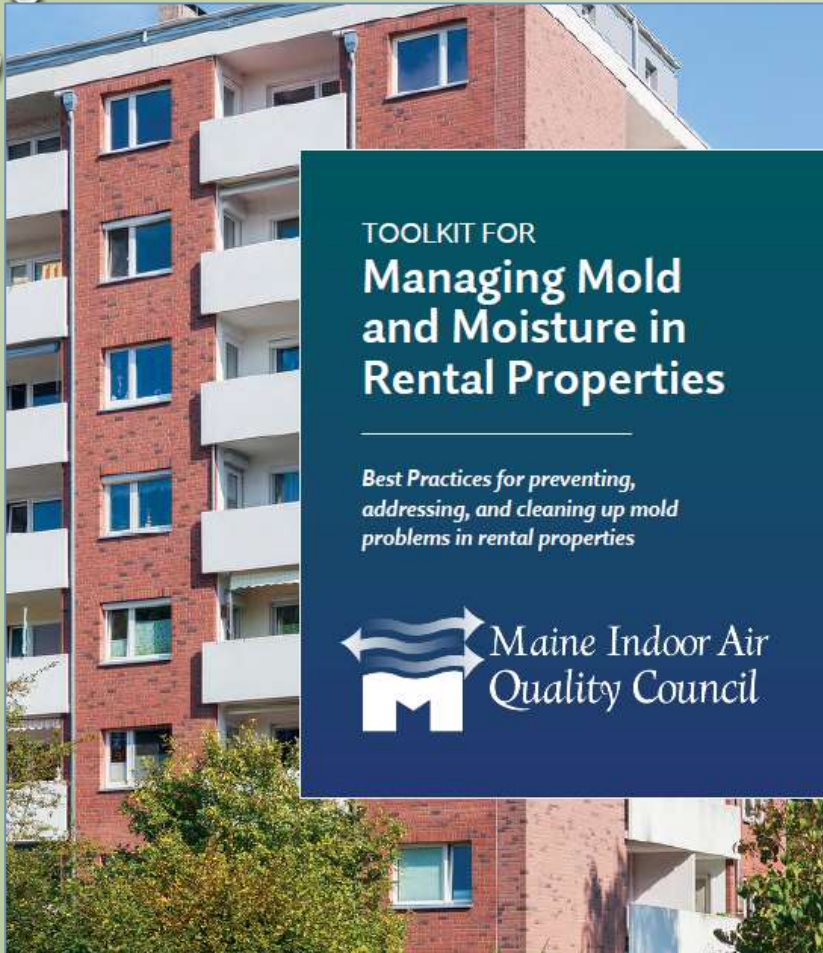


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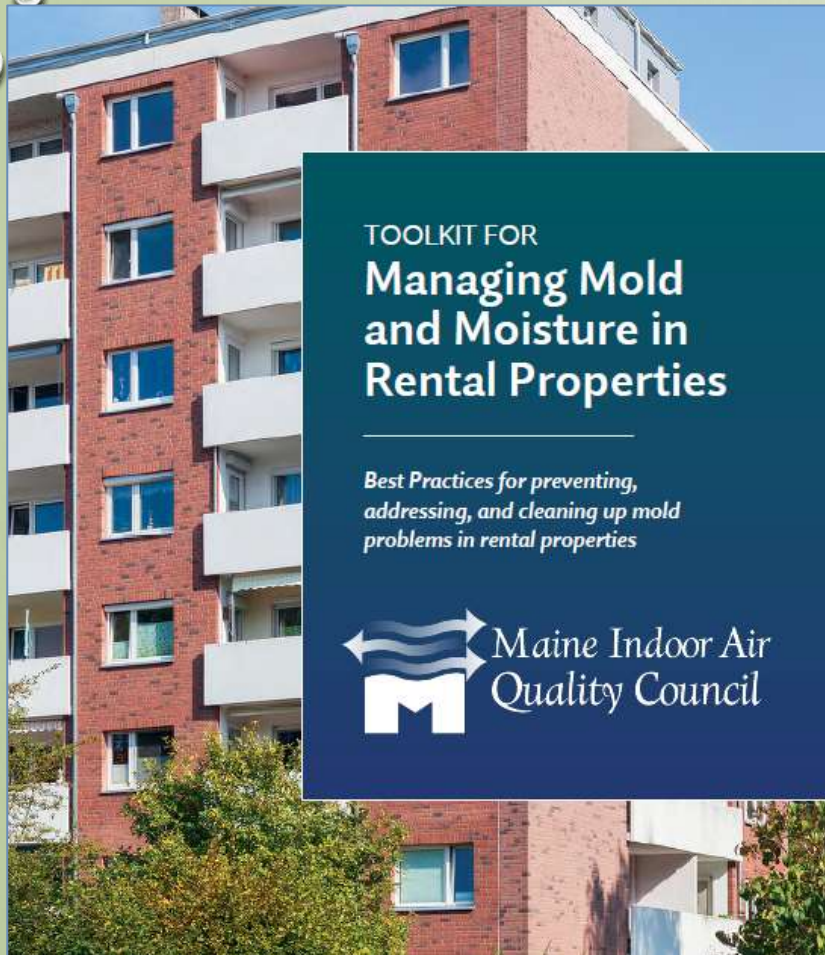


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- Free, best-practice guidance document
- Created by 20+ individuals representing the landlord, tenant, public health, building code, and legal assistance sectors
- Made for landlords and tenants, but also applicable to homeowners, health officials, municipal officials and legal professionals
- Available here: www.maineindoorair.org/iaq-in-rental-properties/





- Strategies to prevent mold growth through moisture management
- Step-by-step framework for landlord and tenant actions when mold or moisture problems occur
- Tips for proper clean-up and repair of smaller mold problems
- Additional resources from credible, science-based organizations.

Basic Mold Facts...



What Is Mold?

- Mold = Fungi
- Variety of colors and textures
- Ultimate recycler
- Everywhere

**Mold
Growth =**



+



Why Mold Is of Concern

Building Damage

- Causes building decay
- Creates odor
- Stains surfaces
- Attract unwanted visitors: ants, mice, roaches, and other pests.



Impact on Health

- Itchy eyes, runny nose, headaches, skin rashes
- Allergies
- Worsened asthma (1 in 9 Mainers have asthma)
- Infections in individuals with serious or life-long illness



Most symptoms are temporary and will go away once a mold problem is fixed

Preventing Moisture Problems in Homes and Rental Properties

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure...

Strategies to Prevent Moisture Problems Landlords



**1. Moisture Maintenance
and Repairs**



**2. Annual Moisture
Inspection**

PREVENTING MOISTURE PROBLEMS: LANDLORD MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS



PREVENTING MOISTURE PROBLEMS: **LANDLORD MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS**



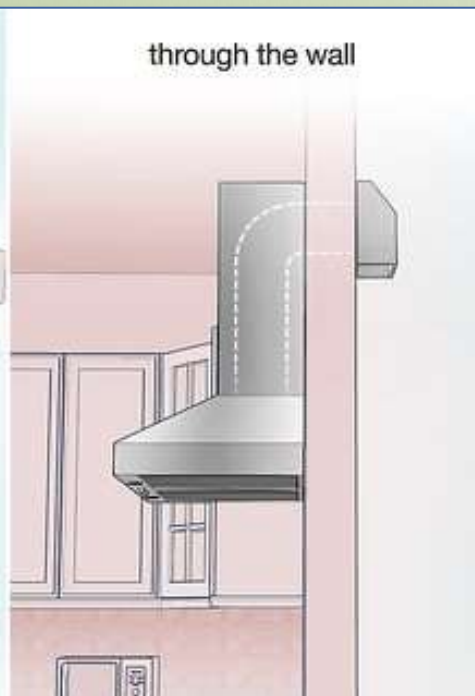
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Ventilation Tip!

Low-noise fans have a better chance of being used by occupants.

Connect bathroom fan and light on a single switch so fan automatically turns on when the light is turned on.

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Dehumidifier Tip!

Select a model that meets both your, and your tenants, needs and lifestyle.

For basement applications, select unit intended for basement use.

Dehumidifiers require periodic maintenance.

PREVENTING MOISTURE PROBLEMS: LANDLORD MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS



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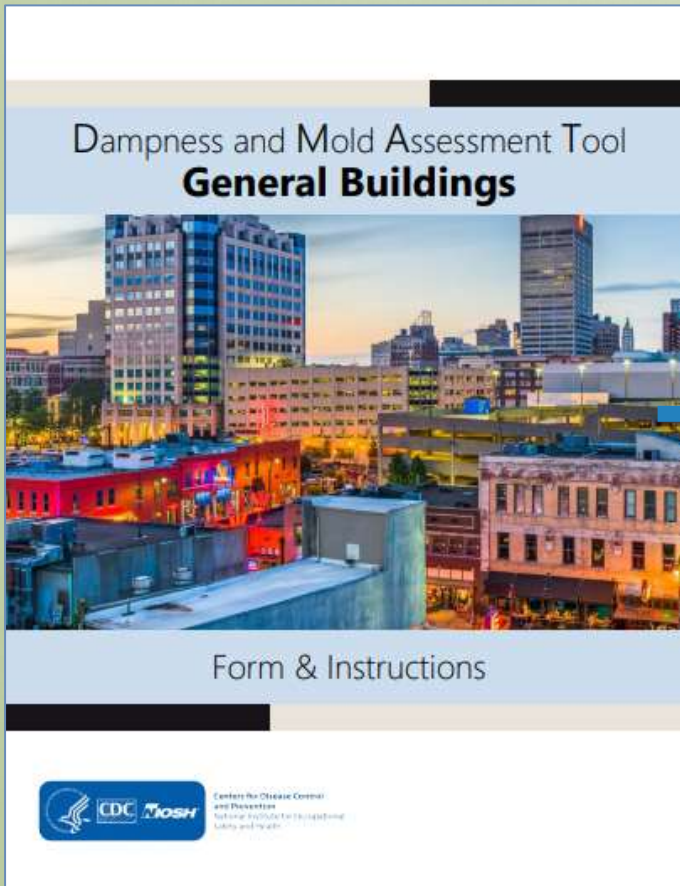
PREVENTING MOISTURE PROBLEMS: LANDLORD MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS




PREVENTING MOISTURE PROBLEMS: THE ANNUAL MOISTURE INSPECTION

- Plumbing under sinks and in the basement
- Windows and doors
- Around tubs, showers, sinks, and toilets
- Roofs and attics
- Ceilings and walls
- Carpets
- Washing machine connections
- Basements and crawlspaces
- Evidence of pests

GUIDANCE: NIOSH





Dampness and Mold Assessment Tool

General Buildings Form
Use one form per area being assessed.

General Information

Date:
Observer:
Building:
Floor:
Room/Area Identification:

Room/Area Type: Describe below the type of room/area you are assessing.

Mold Odor: Fill in the bubble for mold odor. Be sure to smell for mold odor when you first walk into the room/area.
 None Mild Moderate Strong Describe source of mold odor: _____ Source Unknown

	See scoring below for ① ② ③.	Check if nothing found	Damage or Stains	Check if near exterior wall*	Visible Mold	Check if near exterior wall*	Wet or Damp	Check if near exterior wall*	Component Notes	Assessment Notes
✓	Check if component is in the room/area.	✓	See scoring below	✓	See scoring below	✓	See scoring below	✓	Fill in the bubbles for the type of material that is affected.	Fill in the bubbles for additional detail. Describe if "Other"
✓	Ceiling		① ② ③		① ② ③		① ② ③		<input type="radio"/> Ceiling tile <input type="radio"/> Plaster <input type="radio"/> Concrete <input type="radio"/> Sheet rock <input type="radio"/> Metal <input type="radio"/> Wood	<input type="radio"/> Peeling paint <input type="radio"/> Rust Other:
✓	Walls		① ② ③		① ② ③		① ② ③		<input type="radio"/> Sheet rock <input type="radio"/> Plaster <input type="radio"/> Concrete <input type="radio"/> Block <input type="radio"/> Brick <input type="radio"/> Tile <input type="radio"/> Wood	<input type="radio"/> Peeling paint <input type="radio"/> Efflorescence Other:
✓	Floor		① ② ③		① ② ③		① ② ③		<input type="radio"/> Wood <input type="radio"/> Carpet <input type="radio"/> Vinyl <input type="radio"/> Ceramic <input type="radio"/> Concrete	<input type="radio"/> Buckling Other:
	Windows		① ② ③		① ② ③		① ② ③		<input type="radio"/> Exterior <input type="radio"/> Interior <input type="radio"/> Skylight	<input type="radio"/> Peeling paint <input type="radio"/> Condensation Other:
	Furnishings		① ② ③		① ② ③		① ② ③		<input type="radio"/> Furniture <input type="radio"/> Mechanical <input type="radio"/> Sink <input type="radio"/> Toilet <input type="radio"/> Copier	<input type="radio"/> Peeling paint <input type="radio"/> Rust Other:
	HVAC systems		① ② ③		① ② ③		① ② ③		<input type="radio"/> Radiator <input type="radio"/> Forced-air <input type="radio"/> Fan <input type="radio"/> Unit ventilator <input type="radio"/> Window unit	<input type="radio"/> Peeling paint <input type="radio"/> Rust Other:
	Supplies & Materials		① ② ③		① ② ③		① ② ③		<input type="radio"/> Books <input type="radio"/> Boxes <input type="radio"/> Equipment	<input type="radio"/> Wrinkled pages <input type="radio"/> Crumpled boxes Other:
	Pipes		① ② ③		① ② ③		① ② ③		<input type="radio"/> Plumbing <input type="radio"/> Gas	<input type="radio"/> Peeling paint <input type="radio"/> Rust Other:

General Notes

* Within 3 feet of exterior wall.
Scoring: ① = none ② < or = the size of a sheet of paper ③ > than a sheet of paper to the size of a standard door ④ > than the size of a standard door

PREVENTING MOISTURE PROBLEMS: DAILY ACTIVITIES AND MONITORING BY TENANTS



PREVENTING MOISTURE PROBLEMS: **DAILY ACTIVITIES AND MONITORING BY TENANTS**



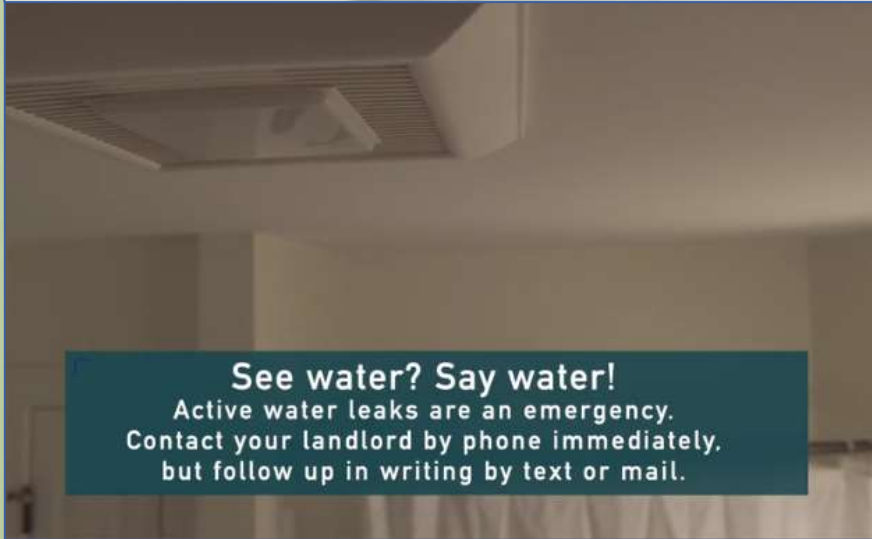
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When There's A Problem...



Liquid Water = Emergency!

- Act IMMEDIATELY, doing whatever necessary to stop the leak.
- Then fix the leak source, followed by proper drying, clean-up, and repair.



Mold & Mold Odors = Investigate

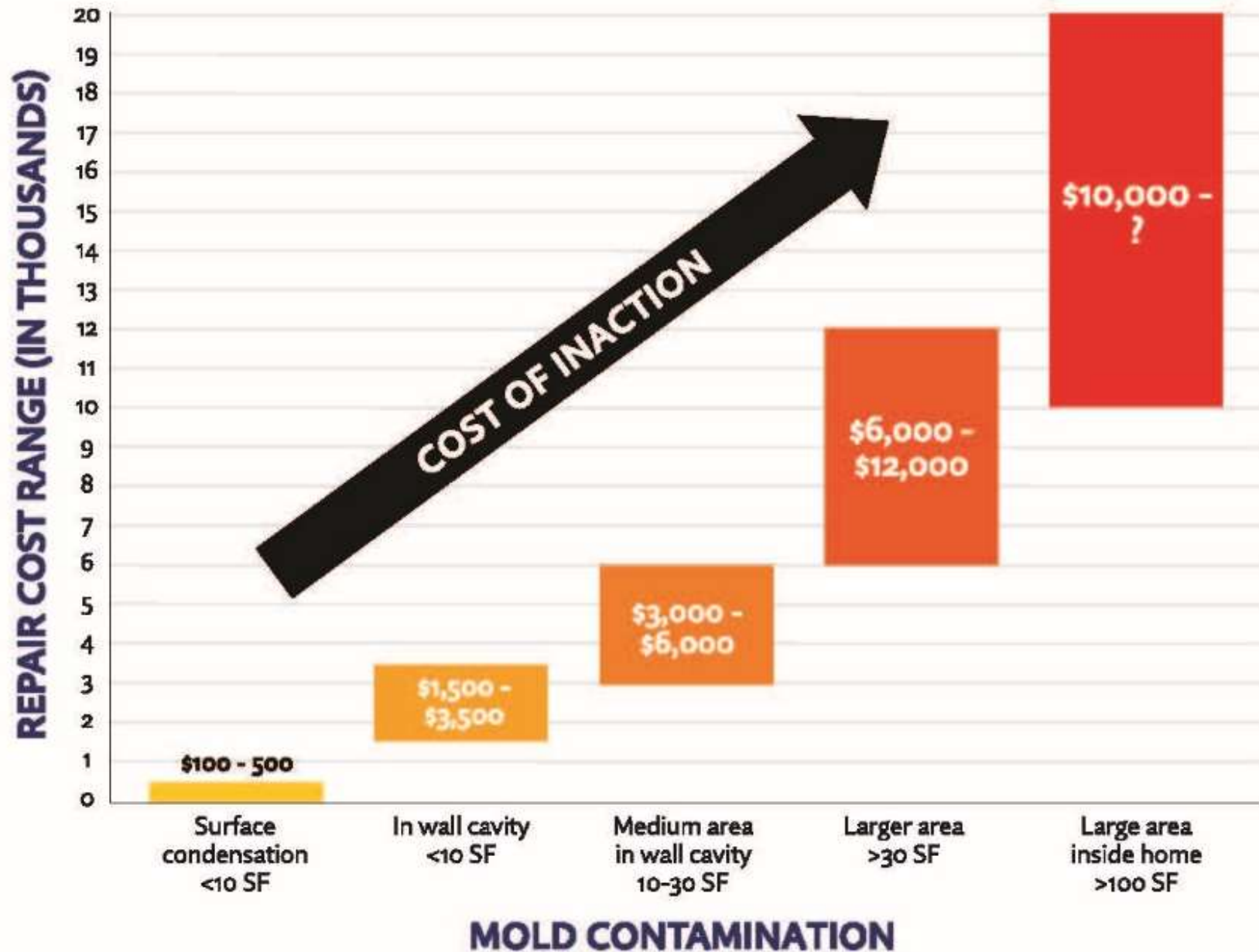
- Investigate for moisture and odor sources
- Inspect the whole building thoroughly
- Create a repair and restoration plan

See mold? Say mold!

Notify your landlord of mold growth by phone, but follow-up in writing by text or mail.



It costs to wait...



Communicate



- All communications between landlords and tenants should be put into writing (email or mail).
- Landlords can set the stage for great communications by informing tenants about their expectations for communication prior to signing the lease.
- Post tenant checklist and signs about moisture management. (available at maineindoorair.org)

Mold Clean-up

Correct Mold Problems in 1-2-3

1. Fix Moisture Problem

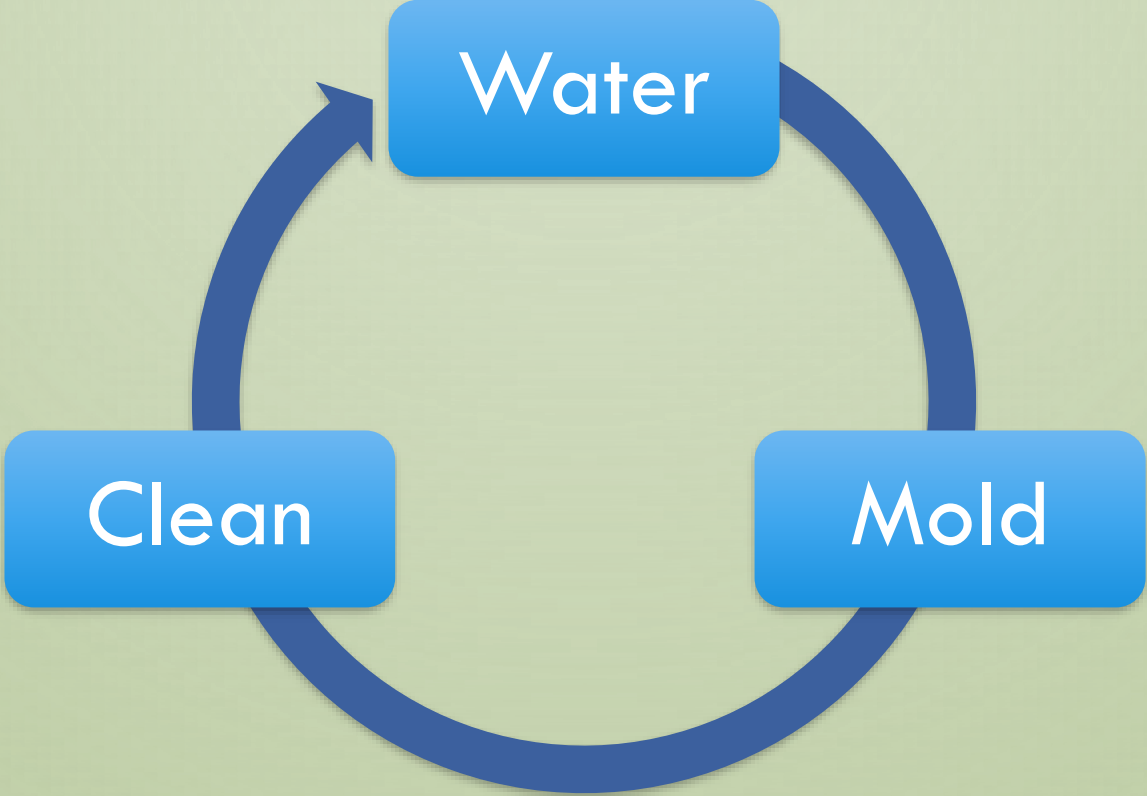


2. Remove Mold

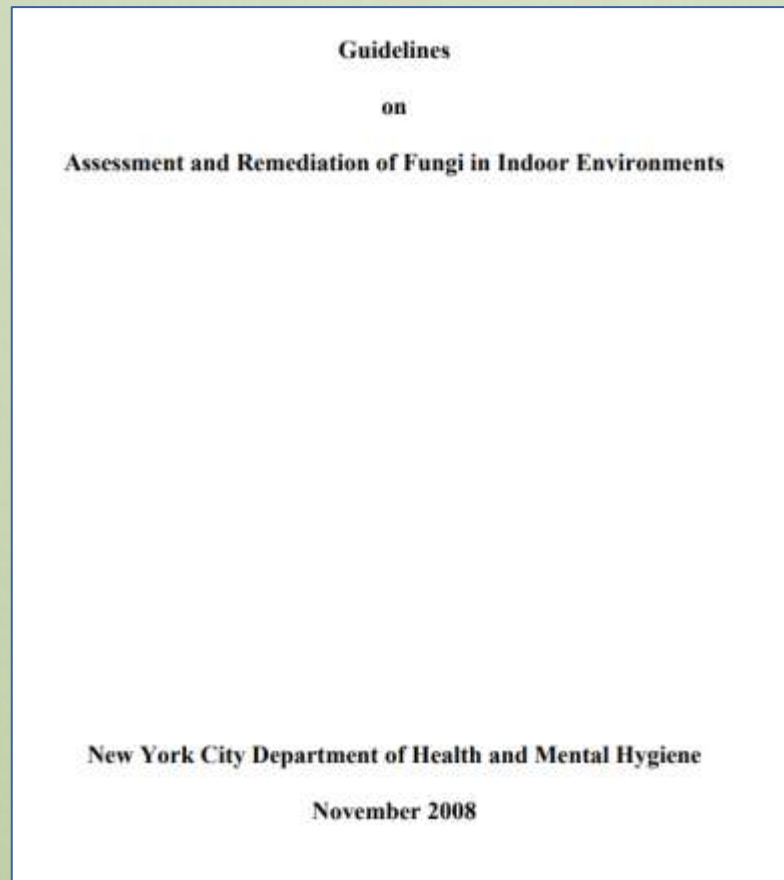
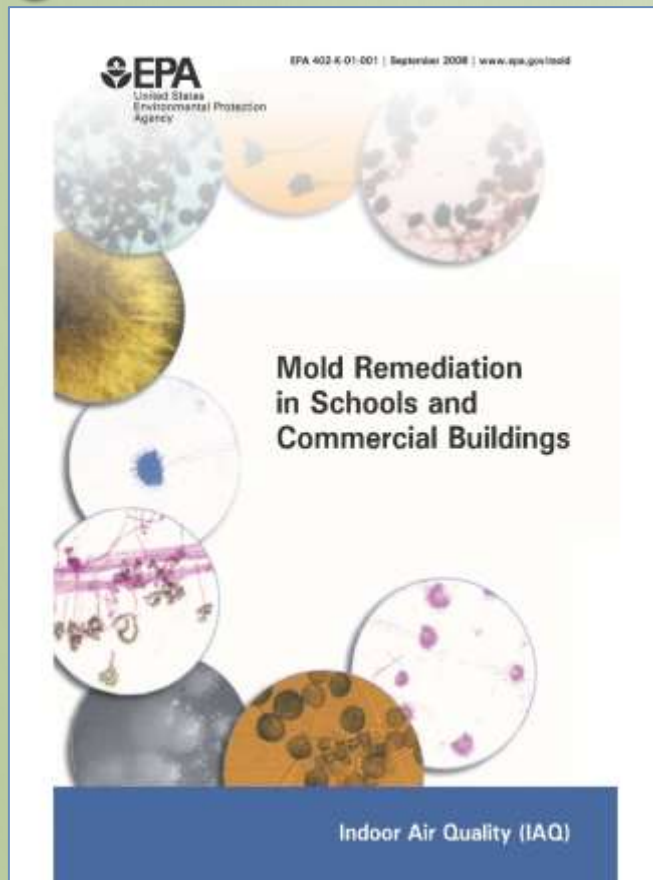


3. Clean & Repair Area

Fix The Problem



Follow Best Practice Guidance



Know When You Need Help



versus



Find A Professional



- **NEHA:** National Environmental Health Association
- **AIHA:** American Industrial Hygiene Association
- **IICRC:** Institute of Inspection Cleaning and Restoration Certification
- **ACAC:** American Council for Accredited Certification
- **ABIH:** American Board of Industrial Hygiene

Protect Yourself



Know What You've Got



No People



Contain



Cover



Remove It



Assess Your Skills



Do Not Disturb



Bag It



Cleaning Items & Furniture



Clean Up Your Mess



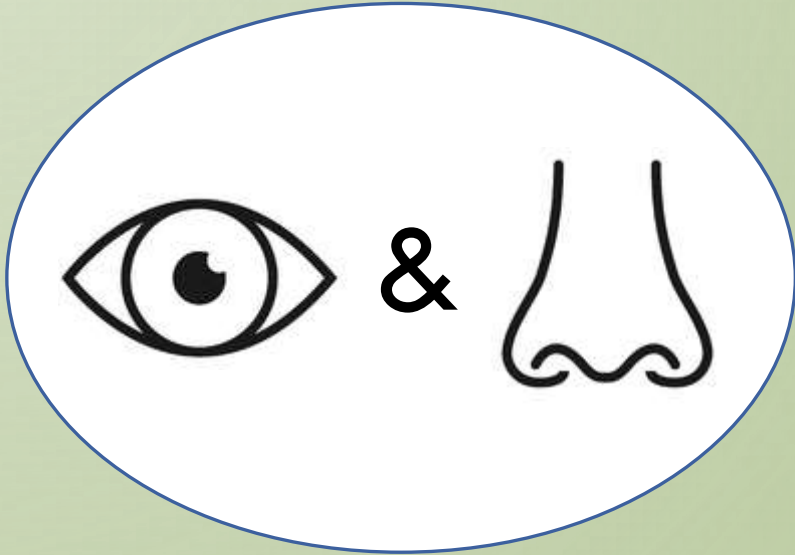
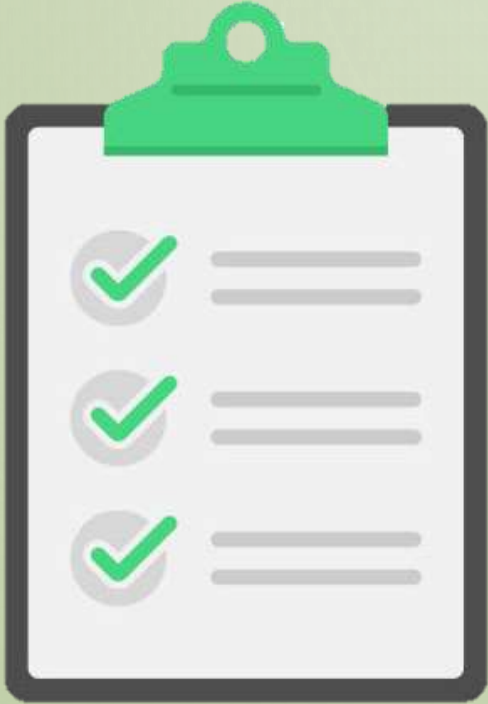
Make It Better Than Before



Do The White Glove Test



Revisit



What About Bleach?



What About Testing?

- Can test air and surfaces for mold, but not standardized
- Visual and moisture inspections can tell you a lot
- Mold growth = moisture problem
- Hidden mold or occupant sensitives may proctor testing

What Financial Options?

- Possible repairs through local CAP agency or Maine State Housing Authority
- Homeowner Insurance claims

When The Toolkit Is Not Enough?

“Here’s what Christy says...”



- Code Enforcement Officer
- Local Health Officer
- Legal Professional (Pine Tree Legal Assistance for Low Income)
- If HUD-funded: local housing authority, Maine State Housing Authority
- Rattle the cage: town councilor, State representative/senator, U.S. representative/senator, the media
- Find another place to live

Rental Property Resources

Toolkit, Checklists, Infographics, and Videographics



IAQ Resources

Tipsheets, Policy Statements, and Best Practice Guidelines



***To view more of our resources and events,
visit us at www.maineindoorair.org***

Maine Indoor Air Quality Council

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