

Other media highlight "Stachybotrys Chartarum" (Atra) mold as extremely dangerous. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) notes that "we do not believe that one needs to take any different precautions with Stachybotrys Atra than with other molds". In other words, remediation for this variety would be the same as remediation for other more common and less toxic molds such as Aspergillus or Alternaria.

MOLD TESTING:

Testing for mold can be very useful in developing a remediation plan. Usually, testing is conducted to:

- A. Establish the Source and Extent of the Mold Presence,
- B. Identify Suspicious Growth,
- C. Determine The Effectiveness of Mold Remediation.

Trained professionals should conduct these tests since there are no clear standards ("Threshold Limit Values") for mold concentrations. Professional Mold Testers will use a baseline of outdoor testing to establish relative counts of airborne mold spores. A Remediation Specialist as part of an overall remediation plan will interpret the test results. The EPA contends that "In most cases, if visible mold is present sampling is unnecessary". (See: "Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings" EPA). Mold testing should follow some visual detective work to determine the source of the moisture. Mr. McGregor Pearce, MPH, reminds us that mold sampling should be the result of questions raised during an inspection such as:

"What is that smell?"

"What is that black stuff?"

"Why is the breathing environment so difficult and uncomfortable?"

There are three basic sample types: Air, Surface, and Bulk (such as carpet pieces). The professional tester should establish the extent of testing and therefore, the cost of testing varies. The tester's results allow health professionals with experience in evaluating mold contamination to develop an overall plan for treatment of the occupant and the building.

Two local testing companies are:

Compliance Environmental International, Inc. and
Alban Home Inspection Services.

PROFESSIONAL SOURCES AND RESOURCES:

1. EPA "Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings" www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/ or 1-800-438-4318 or Email: iaqinfo@aol.com
2. New York Department of Health, Bureau of Environmental and Occupational Disease Epidemiology, "Guidelines on Assessment and Remediation of Fungi in Indoor Environments" 212-788-4290.
3. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), National Center for Environmental Health, "Questions and Answers about Stachybotrys Chartarum and Other Molds", 1-888-232-6789 or www.cdc.gov.
4. Association of Specialists in Cleaning and Restoration (ASCR) www.ASCR.org or 1-800-272-7012.
5. American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (AAAAI) www.AAAAI.org or 1-800-822-2762.
6. American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) 703-849-8888 or www.aiha.org
7. "Indoor Mold and Children's Health" Environmental Health Perspectives, Vol. 107, Suppl. 3, June 1999
8. "This is a moldy planet".
McGregor Pearce, MPH
E-mail pearceOT1@tc.umn.edu or 651-646-4513
9. Alban Home Inspection Services. 1-800-822-7200.
10. Air-Right Energy Design Inc. 703-754-0622
11. Compliance Environmental International, Inc. (Testing Lab of Industrial Hygienists) Tel: 410-766-0222. Website: www.compliance-enviro.com Contact: Mr. Archie Barrett.

The Above Information is provided compliments of :

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MOLDS IN HOUSES:

A BRIEF PRIMER
By: Faro Systems, Inc.



MOLDS: What are They?

Moldtox © Faro Systems Inc.

Molds are Fungi. Fungi are neither animals nor plants; they are in a kingdom of their own. Fungi include mushrooms, molds, yeast and puffballs. There are over 20,000 species of mold in the world. They can be found almost anywhere.