

COUNTER MOLD 101



Counter Mold Communication Resource Guide



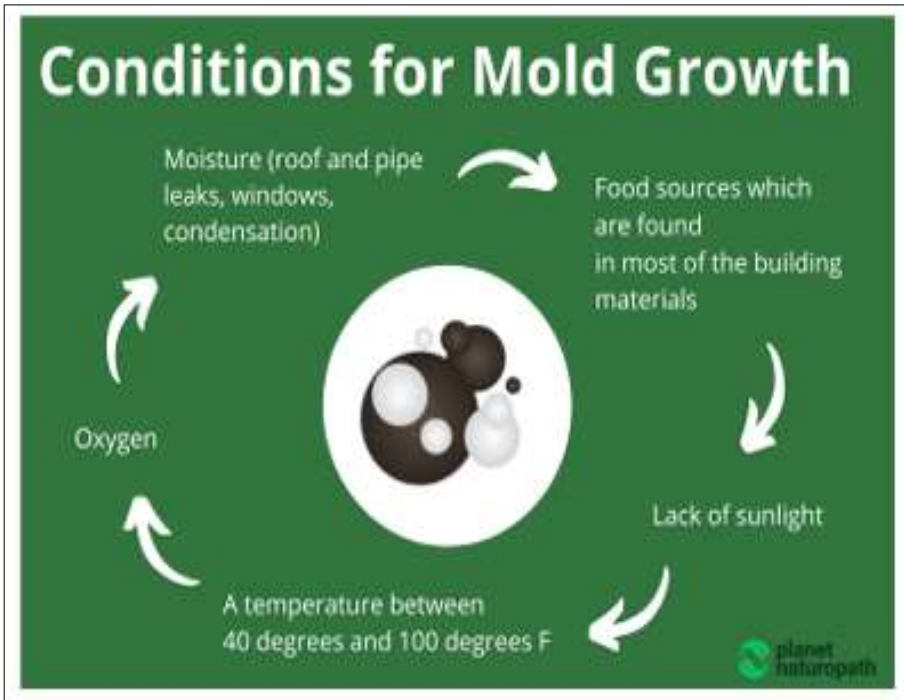
WE ARE THE ARMY'S HOME



Counter Mold 101

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The purpose of this Counter Mold Communications Resource Guide is to provide guidance and resources for IMCOM professionals to effectively communicate key messages that are consistent throughout the command to improve and maintain Quality of Life for our Soldiers, Families, and Civilians who work and live in Army-maintained barracks, housing, and other facilities.

Thank you for utilizing this Counter Mold Resource Guide, compiled by the U.S. Army Installation Management Command Headquarters Public Affairs team. This guide provides IMCOM professionals with tools and ideas for developing content to effectively communicate with our Soldiers, Families, and Civilians about operation counter mold.

The purpose of this operation is to proactively eliminate threats to life, health, and safety from mold and improve the quality of life for people in Army facilities.

As IMCOM professionals, our main objective is taking care of our people. We all know mold exists; let's collectively do what we can to ensure all facilities are free of hazardous mold by enforcing our standards, informing and educating residents and leaders, developing and sharing command-wide prevention tactics, techniques and procedures, and constructively reframing how we all think about mold.

To that end, this resource guide encompasses the “best practices” from various garrisons' public affairs offices. We hope these examples will inspire and enable you to develop new materials relevant to your location.

We encourage you to use this resource guide to synchronize communication with your teammates, leaders, residents, and community partners.

U.S. Army Installation Management Command Headquarters Public Affairs Team

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Counter Mold 101

Definitions

Mold - A naturally occurring microscopic fungi that can grow on indoor and outdoor surfaces. Mold can live in all environments, climates, and seasons but requires oxygen, moisture, and a nutrient source to grow. The types of molds and their abundance in an area depend on the availability of nutrients like dirt, water, and temperature. Molds grow well on cardboard, ceiling tiles, paper, and wood products.

Mildew - A general term used to refer to certain kinds of mold or fungus that typically grow in a flat growth pattern and found on shower walls, windowsills, and other places with high moisture levels.

Black/Toxic Mold - A generic term used to refer to toxigenic molds, or molds that produce mycotoxins. This term typically refers to the species *stachybotrys chartarum*, which can be identified in water damaged buildings.



Counter Mold 101

Top line messaging

- The Army is committed to providing safe quality housing, barracks, and other facilities for our Soldiers, Families, and civilians. A critical aspect of this commitment is ensuring all facilities are free of hazardous mold.
- As the Army Materiel Command (AMC) major subordinate command responsible for managing the Regular Army's infrastructure and for overseeing the Army's privatized housing projects, Installation Management Command (IMCOM) has undertaken a holistic, global effort to reduce the risk of hazardous mold in Army facilities and housing.
- This effort has been informed by the Army's public health experts and is grounded in the Army Public Health Center's (APHC) Technical Guides 277 titled "Army Mold Remediation Guidance," and 278 titled "Mold Assessment Guide". IMCOM applies these publication's definition of hazardous mold and mitigation/remediation standards across the command.
- IMCOM Garrison Commanders are training and certifying all mold inspectors and government remediation teams to the APHC standard and placing these individuals on appointment orders.
- IMCOM will ensure all work orders for mold in Army facilities are responded to by a certified inspector within 24 hours. The command is also ensuring the privatized housing companies similarly respond to mold work orders.
- If the certified inspector identifies a hazardous condition based on the APHC standard, the area is appropriately contained and isolated while a certified mitigation and remediation team (government or contracted) eliminates the hazardous condition. The privatized housing companies are following a similar approach and safely displacing families while remediation occurs.
- A certified government inspector will validate that no hazardous conditions exist before allowing the facility to fully reopen. Certified government inspectors will also validate that no hazardous conditions exist in privatized housing during the quality assurance process.



Leader Quotes: “In our Army, it’s about People First and the care and quality of life for our Soldiers and their families is always forefront in our minds. We’re investing in our barracks and housing to give our Soldiers and families the quality of life that’s equal to the quality of their service.” --- General James C. McConville, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army.

“Our purpose is to proactively eliminate threats to life, health, and safety from mold and improve the quality of life for people in Army facilities. This will allow IMCOM, Army Materiel Command (AMC), and the Army to reinforce the Army’s commitment to quality facilities and investment in our Army Soldiers, Families, and Civilians.” ---

Lt. Gen. Omar Jones IV, Commanding General, U.S. Army Installation Management Command.

Public Statement: The Army’s Installation Management Command (IMCOM) is implementing a comprehensive and enduring plan to inform and educate Soldiers, Families, and Civilians about how they can help counter the presence of mold in all Army facilities before the summer, when mold presents the highest risk to our people, and facilities.



Mold Identification, Remediation, and Prevention Checklist

LIVING ROOM

Walls and Ceilings

- If mold is greater than 10 sq. ft. submit Demand Maintenance Order (DMO)
- Clean all excess dust, dirt, and grime (routine housekeeping)

Furniture

- Make sure furniture is not blocking HVAC air flow
- Clean all dirt, dust, and grime (routine housekeeping)

Windows

- Check for cracks or chips in the glass or surrounding frame (submit DMO)
- Make sure blinds are open (sunlight inhibits mold growth)
- Check for any water intrusion or condensation on sill or surrounding area (submit DMO)
- Clean all dirt, dust, and grime (routine housekeeping)
- Any outside air intrusion (submit DMO)

Thermostat and Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) System

- A/C should be set per Army requirements.
- HVAC – should remain on at all times
- Clean all vents of excess dirt, dust, and grime (routine housekeeping)

KITCHEN

Refrigerator

- Inspect for mold (routine housekeeping)
- Check for excessive condensation or water leaks (repair or replace seals, contact Facility Manager to have unit replaced)
- Clean excess dirt, dust, and grime (routine housekeeping)

Sink and Cabinets

- Inspect sink and plumbing for leaks (submit DMO)
- If mold is greater than 10 sq. ft. (submit DMO)

Front Door and Entrance Way

- Malfunctions: auto-closer that do not work or lock properly (submit DMO)
- Check for large gaps or weather-stripping damage (submit DMO)
- If mold is greater than 10 sq. ft. (submit DMO)

Common area

- Clean floors, furniture, kitchen cabinetry, and appliances (routine housekeeping)
- Dispose of trash and food (routine housekeeping)

BATHROOM

Walls and Ceiling

- If mold is greater than 10 sq. ft. (submit DMO)
- If visible moisture appears in bathroom. Make sure exhaust vent is working properly, if it is not working (submit DMO)
- If mold is in tub caulking (submit a DMO to replace caulking)

Sink

- Inspect sink and plumbing for leaks (submit DMO)
- If mold is greater than 10 sq. ft. (submit DMO)

ACTIONS TAKEN/REQUIRED

Barracks Facilities

Mold Growth

- Less than 10 sq. ft. Sign out a “Mold Buster Kit” from Self-Help Bldg. 4541 or Environmental Bldg. 2522; Kit includes all cleaning agents, personal protective equipment, and instructions for cleaning
- If mold is greater than 10 sq. ft. (submit DMO)



Q1. How does the Army define mold?

A1. Mold is a naturally occurring microscopic fungi that can grow on indoor and outdoor surfaces. Mold can live in all environments, climates, and seasons but requires oxygen, moisture, and a nutrient source to grow. The types of molds and their abundance depend on the availability of nutrients like dirt, water, and temperature. Molds grow well on cardboard, ceiling tiles, paper, and wood products.

Q2: Why the big effort to counter mold now?

A2: Last fall, Army senior leaders directed IMCOM and installation leaders to inspect Army facilities with an emphasis on life, health, and safety with a focus on mold. More importantly, one of IMCOM's core competencies is to manage the regular Army's infrastructure. We recognize Soldiers, Families and Civilians are concerned with mold, but may lack sufficient knowledge on how to properly identify it, report it and, when appropriate, mitigate it. As part of this operation, IMCOM professionals will inform and educate members of the Army community of roles they can play to help increase our collective understanding of how to think about and deal with mold on our installations. IMCOM professionals are also training and certifying inspectors to meet the standards established for this operation.

Q3: To date, what has been done to remediate these mold issues?

A3: Between November 2022 and January 2023, leaders inspected active Army barracks, childcare facilities, and Army-owned family housing (67,859 facilities). 97% of facilities were mold free, the mold that was found was immediately remediated to standard.

IMCOM held a Counter Mold Workshop Jan.10-12, 2023, with healthcare professionals, industry experts, DoD partners, and garrison leadership to find ways to raise awareness and prevent and mitigate mold. This effort was informed by the Army's public health experts and grounded in the Army Public Health Center's (APHC) Technical Guides 277 titled "Army Mold Remediation Guidance," and 278 titled "Mold Assessment Guide". IMCOM applies the definition of hazardous mold and mitigation/ remediation standards across the command from these publications.



Q4: What does mold treatment entail?

A4: Remediation plans will vary depending on the extent of damage. Smaller, isolated areas of less than 10 square feet of visible mold can generally be remediated by either housing staff or tenants. Larger areas of visible mold may require experienced professional mold remediation teams. During treatment the area will be contained to prevent the mold from spreading to other areas. All surfaces will be cleaned.

Q5: How will the Army enable its personnel to protect against and prevent mold in the future?

A5: Identified Soldiers will attend a *Mold Assessment and Remediation in Buildings* training course. The course teaches industry-standard mold remediation practices these Soldiers can bring back to their units and apply at their installation. Following a 100-question exam at the end of the course, participants are awarded a Mold Inspector/Remediator certification. As part of the training, participants are taught how mold forms and receive hands-on training with specialized tools and equipment that they will use to inspect, identify, and treat mold. The emphasis is on prevention as the best way to manage mold.

Q6: Is the Army treating all mold as if it were hazardous or toxic?

A6: APHC treatment guidelines are based on the size of an affected area to make it easier for exterminators to select the appropriate treatment. When in doubt, caution is advised.



Q7: If Soldiers reside in a barracks that is known to have mold, are they entitled to any additional health claims or considerations? Is there a registry anywhere?

A7: U.S. Army Medical Command (MEDCOM) established a [Housing Environmental Health Response Registry](#) to address Army family concerns about Army family housing and related health issues.

Q8: How Do I get rid of Mold?

A8: It is impossible to get rid of all mold and mold spores indoors; some mold spores will be found floating through the air and in house dust. The mold spores will not grow if moisture is not present. Indoor mold growth can and should be prevented or controlled by controlling moisture indoors. Where there is mold/mildew growth, it must be cleaned up the water leak repaired. Simply cleaning up without fixing the water problem will not prevent the mold from coming back.

Q9: Who should do the cleanup?

A9: Clean up is the individual responsibility of every Soldier, Civilian professional, or Family member living or working in Army-maintained barracks, housing, or other facility in the prevention phase. Accomplish this through daily cleaning, using shower fans and ensuring they work, drying surface areas and fixing water or moisture leaks as soon as they are identified.

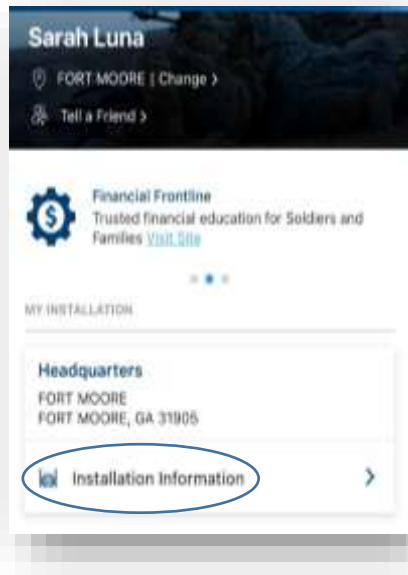
Who should do the cleanup also depends on several factors. Smaller, isolated areas of less than 10 square feet of visible mold can generally be remediated by either housing staff or tenants. If it larger that 10 square feet but less than about 25 square feet, the tenant should put in a work order. Contact DPW via 24/7 hotline through ArMA, the Army's on-line work order submission and tracking system at [ArmyMaintenance.com](#) (ArMA).



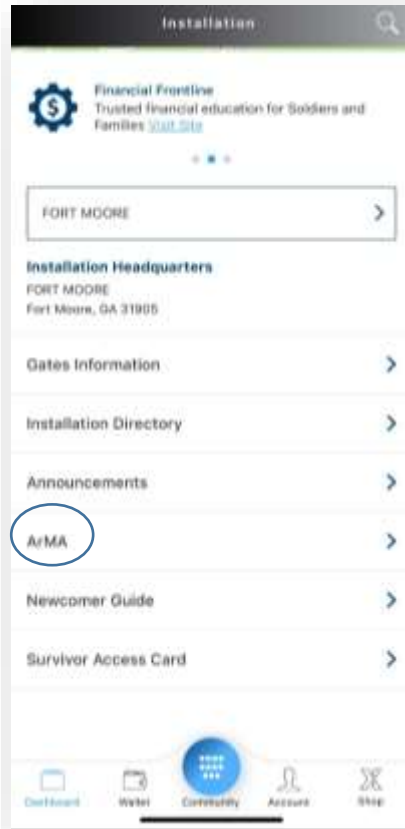
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ArMA Access through Digital Garrison

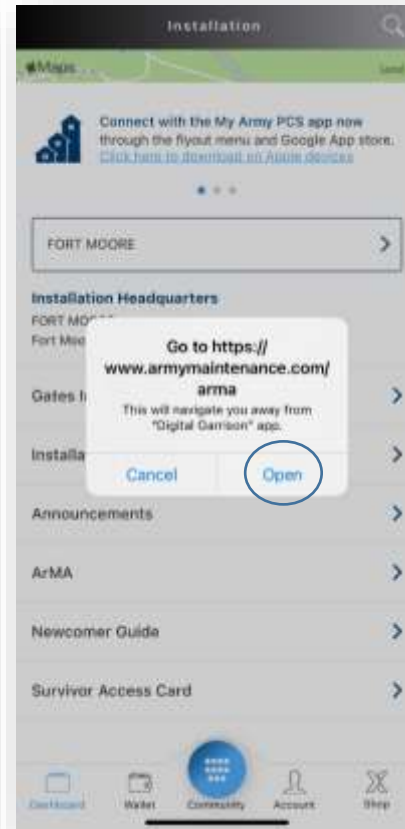
1. Download or open Digital Garrison



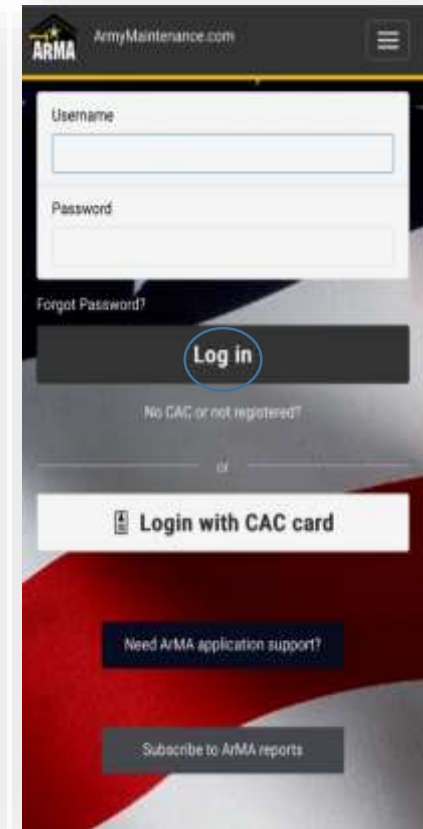
2. Tap Installation Information



3. Tap ArMA



4. Tap Open



5. Log into ArMA



Counter Mold 101 Army Maintenance Reporting



Family housing residents who suspect mold should submit a service order to the 24/7 Maintenance Request Line at **xxx-xxx-xxxx**. Soldiers with mold concerns in barracks should submit a work order by visiting www.armymaintenance.com/arma, or call the Directorate of Public Works work order request line at **xxx-xxx-xxxx**.



Housing residents may also contact the (Garrison) Housing Office hotline at **xxx xxx-xxxx**.



All work orders for mold in Army facilities are responded to by a certified inspector within 24 hours or the next business day.



8 TIPS TO CLEAN UP MOLD

- 
Protect Yourself
 Put on personal protective equipment (gloves, mask, goggles) to protect your eyes, nose, mouth, and skin.
- 
Toss!
 Take it out! Anything that was wet with flood water and can't be cleaned and dried completely within 24 to 48 hours should be taken outside. Take photos of discarded items for filing insurance claims.
- 
Air it out
 Open all doors and windows when you are working, and leave as many open as you safely can when you leave.
- 
Circulate
 When electricity is safe to use, use fans and dehumidifiers to remove moisture.
- 
Don't mix cleaners
 If you use cleaning products, do not mix cleaning products together. DO NOT mix bleach and ammonia because it can create toxic vapors.
- 
Scrub surfaces
 Clean with water and a detergent. Remove all mold you can see. Dry right away.
- 
Don't cover it, remove it
 Painting or caulking over mold will not prevent mold from growing. Fix the water problem completely and clean up all the mold before you paint or caulk.
- 
Dry it up
 Dry your home and everything in it as quickly as possible – within 24 to 48 hours if you can.

<http://www.cdc.gov/mold/cleanup.htm>



The Key to Mold Control is Moisture Control

Mold... no one wants it in their home. Mold produces allergens and can cause health problems. Although mold is naturally found in the indoor environment, it won't grow without moisture.

Take steps to control mold and moisture indoors:



Reduce humidity: use exhaust fans or open windows in kitchens and bathrooms, and use air conditioners or dehumidifiers as needed.



Prevent condensation by reducing humidity, increasing ventilation, or raising the indoor air temperature.



Completely dry any damp or wet surfaces within 24-48 hours, and fix the source of the water problem or leak.

If mold does grow in your home...



Promptly fix the source of any water problems or leaks.



Clean mold off of hard surfaces with water and detergent, and dry completely.



Absorbent materials that have mold growth may need to be replaced – e.g. ceiling tiles, carpet, furniture.



If you are experiencing symptoms that you think are caused by mold, consult a medical professional.



Visit epa.gov/mold to learn what personal protective equipment to wear to limit your mold exposure. If mold or water damage is extensive, or the water is not clean, consult a professional.



epa.gov/mold



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You Can Control Mold

Mold can cause many health effects. For some people, mold can cause a stuffy nose, sore throat, coughing or wheezing, burning eyes, or skin rash. People with asthma or who are allergic to mold may have severe reactions. Immune-compromised people and people with chronic lung disease may get infections in their lungs from mold.

There is always some mold around. Molds have been on the Earth for millions of years. Mold can get in your home through open doors, windows, vents, and heating and air conditioning systems. Mold in the air outside can be brought indoors on clothing, shoes, bags, and even pets.

Mold will grow where there is moisture, such as around leaks in roofs, windows, or pipes, or where there has been a flood. Mold grows on paper, cardboard, ceiling tiles, and wood. Mold can also grow in dust, paints, wallpaper, insulation, drywall, carpet, fabric, and upholstery.

If You Have Mold in Your Home

Mold can look like spots. It can be many different colors, and it can smell musty. If you see or smell mold, you should remove it. You do not need to know the type of mold.

If mold is growing in your home, you need to clean up the mold and fix the moisture problem. (Illustration 1 about here: fixing a leaky pipe) Mold can be removed from hard surfaces with household products, soap and water, or a bleach solution of no more than 1 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water. (Illustration 2: measuring 1 cup bleach per 1 gallon water)

If You Use Bleach to Clean up Mold:

- Never mix bleach with ammonia or other household cleaners. Mixing bleach with ammonia or other cleaning products will produce a poisonous gas. (Illustration 3: cross-out of mixing bleach & ammonia)
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions when you use bleach or any other cleaning product.
- Open windows and doors to provide fresh air.
- Wear waterproof gloves and eye protection. (Illustration 4: wearing gloves and eye protection)
- If you need to clean more than 10 square feet, check the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guide titled *Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings*, which gives advice on all building types. You can get it by going to the EPA web site at http://www.epa.gov/mold/mold_remediation.html.



National Center for Environmental Health
Division of Environmental Hazards and Health Effects



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To Prevent Mold Growth in Your Home

- Keep humidity levels in your home as low as you can—no higher than 50%—all day long. An air conditioner or dehumidifier will help you keep the level low. You can buy a meter to check your home's humidity at a home improvement store. (Illustration 5: humidity meter at about 45%) Humidity levels change over the course of a day so you will need to check the humidity levels more than once a day.
- Be sure the air in your home flows freely. Use exhaust fans that vent outside your home in the kitchen and bathroom. Make sure your clothes dryer vents outside your home.
- Fix any leaks in your home's roof, walls, or plumbing so mold does not have moisture to grow.
- Clean up and dry out your home fully and quickly (within 24–48 hours) after a flood.
- Add mold inhibitors to paints before painting. You can buy mold inhibitors at paint and home improvement stores.
- Clean bathrooms with mold-killing products.
- Remove or replace carpets and upholstery that have been soaked and cannot be dried right away. Think about not using carpet in places like bathrooms or basements that may have a lot of moisture.
- To learn more about preventing mold in your home, see the Environmental Protection Agency's book *A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture, and Your Home* at <http://www.epa.gov/mold/moldguide.html>.



Should I get my Home Tested for Mold?

CDC does not recommend mold testing. The health effects of mold can be different for different people so you cannot rely on sampling and culturing to know if you or a member of your family might become sick. No matter what type of mold is present, you need to remove it. Also, good sampling for mold can be expensive, and there are no set standards for what is and what is not an acceptable quantity of different kinds of mold in a home. The best thing you can do is to safely remove the mold and work to prevent future mold growth.



Page 2 of 2

Indoor Mold Exposure

Basic Facts about Mold

- Molds are very common in buildings and homes.
- The color of mold is NOT an indicator of type or health threat.
- The most important factor in controlling mold is eliminating sources of moisture and lowering humidity.
- Mold cannot grow without moisture.

Testing for Mold

- The CDC does not recommend or perform routine sampling for molds.
- There are no set standards for judging what is an acceptable, tolerable, or normal quantity of mold.
- It is not necessary to determine what type of mold you may have growing in your home.
- All molds should be treated the same with respect to potential health risks and removal.

"Black Mold"-*Stachybotrys*

***chararum* "Toxic Black Mold"** refers to a specific species of mold. It is a greenish-black mold that often grows on materials with a high cellulose content, such as fiberboard, gypsum board, and paper.

At present, it has not been proven that is associated with specific health symptoms, but it may cause nonspecific health symptoms like other molds.

Things to Discuss with your Healthcare Provider

If you believe you or a family member are ill because of exposure to mold, take note of the timing of symptoms, and see a healthcare provider for evaluation.

For More Information

APHC - Mold & Indoor Air Quality:

https://phcamed.larmy.mil/Topics/workplace_health/ih/Pages/1ndoor-Air-Quality-Mold.aspx

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/mold/default.htm>

Environmental Protection Agency: <https://www.epa.gov/mold>

Xxxx Army Health Clinic Appointments: xxx-xxx-xxxx

Symptoms of Mold Exposure

Moldy environments may cause a variety of health effects or none at all; mold sensitivity varies among people. People with allergies may be more sensitive to molds. Sometimes symptoms can be immediate or delayed. The most common symptoms are:

- stuffy nose
- sore throat
- coughing
- red or itchy eyes
- skin rash

Wheezing should be evaluated by a healthcare provider. Molds can also cause asthma attacks in people with asthma who are allergic to mold. Symptoms other than the allergic or irritant type are not commonly reported as a result of inhaling mold.

Long-term Effects of Mold

Recent studies have suggested a potential link of early mold exposure to development of asthma in some children, particularly those with a genetic susceptibility to asthma. Those with immune suppression (e.g., HIV infection, cancer patients taking chemotherapy, and people who have received an organ or stem cell transplant) or underlying lung disease are more susceptible to fungal infections.

Lead-based Paint in Military Housing

Fact Sheet for Military Families

- Many homes built before 1978 have lead-based paint.
- Lead from paint chips and dust can pose serious health hazards.
- Lead-contaminated paint is not a hazard if it is contained under other coats of paint that are intact and undisturbed
- No safe blood lead level in children has been identified.
- The adverse effects of lead exposure cannot be corrected once they occur, but there are treatments to remove lead from the body before it causes harm.

What Should You Do if You Think Your Child has been in Contact with Lead?

- Schedule an appointment with your child's health care provider for a lead exposure screening
- A blood lead test is the only definitive way to find out if your child has a high lead level.

Reduce the Risk

- Be aware of the information on potential lead hazards that was given to you when moving in.
- Make sure your child does not have access to peeling paint or painted surfaces they could chew.
- Quickly report peeling paint and water damage to housing maintenance.
- Keep your home clean and dust-free, particularly around painted areas where friction can generate dust, such as doors, windows, and drawers. Wipe these areas frequently with a wet sponge or rag to remove paint chips or dust.
- Wash children's hands, bottles, pacifiers and toys often.

For additional information, contact the Public Health Command, Industrial Hygiene Program Manager - xxxxxx or xxxxx Army Health Clinic, Environmental Health Section - xxxxxxxx

Resources:

- Army Public Health Center - https://phcamed.larmy.mil/Topics/workplace_health/ih/Pages/Lead.aspx
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/default.htm>
- Environmental Protection Agency - <https://www.epa.gov/lead>



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Counter Mold 101 Remediation Guidance



Do not use bleach to clean mold

It is not effective at “killing” mold nor does it remove it from the surface. A simple soap solution or disinfecting cleaner should be used.

Dampen areas prior to cleaning

Surface dusting should include the use of cleaners to avoid sweeping mold and allergens into the air.

Wash clothing

Items used during remediation should be washed as soon as possible after mold clean-up is complete.

General Purpose Cleaning Solution

- Light cleaning and surface mold: pour general purpose cleaner into gallon container and dilute to one gallon with water.
- If one gallon container is not available: pour about 1/4 of the bottle into a spray bottle contained in the Mold Buster Kit and dilute with water.
- Heavy mold growth or dirt: use in concentrated form directly from the bottle.

Re-Growth

- If mold growth is present on a porous material surface cleaning may not remove all mold growth.
- Surface cleaning and sanitizing will not penetrate deep enough to kill all the hidden "root-like" parts of the mold colony, particularly if materials can not be adequately dried.
- Mold contamination below the surface may indicate additional concerns and should be assessed by DPW personnel.



Counter Mold 101 Remediation Guidance

Occupant Facility Maintenance

- Air Conditioning/Heating System must remain on at all times.
- Utilize the exhaust fan when taking a shower.
- Dry moisture on surfaces daily, if present.
- Call in a DMO to repair plumbing leaks and other water problems as soon as possible.
- Open blinds before leaving room.
- Remove dust, dirt, and grime weekly through routine housekeeping.
- Clean mold growth with general purpose cleaner, when it first appears. Do not use bleach to clean mold.
- Mold removal process - moisten, wipe, rinse and dry.
- Do not use blankets or covers to darken the room.
- Keep windows and doors closed at all times.

Government Property

- Care should be utilized when cleaning or sanitizing to avoid damage to government property.
- Disposal of government property contaminated with mold growth, should only be undertaken with the permission of the property book holder and your chain of command.

Removing Mildew

- Soap and water mix in a spray mix in a spray bottle is the preferred solution for mildew removal. Use PPE when cleaning.
- Ensure to dry the surface after cleaning.



How to properly conduct barracks inspections



**CTRL + Click to follow links
to the videos**

How to not let mold grow into a problem



Counter Mold 101 Additional Resources

IMCOM HQ Counter Mold SharePoint
IMCOM Public Affairs:

<https://armyeitaas.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/IMCOM-HQ-PAO/SitePages/Counter-Mold.aspx>

IMCOM G4:

<https://armyeitaas.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/IMCOM-HQ-G4/SitePages/Counter-Mold-Home.aspx>

Defense Centers for Public Health:

<https://phc.amedd.army.mil/search/Pages/results.aspx?k=mold>

