



MOLD AND MOISTURE IN RENTAL HOUSING

WAYS TO REDUCE MOLD

Mold needs water to grow, so controlling moisture and condensation in home is the best way to prevent mold problems.

Here are a few tips:

- Always use bathroom fan during and after showering.
- Use kitchen fan when cooking to reduce humidity.
- Clean up spills and leaks quickly, especially on carpets.
- Create air movement in your home:
- Open windows, when possible.
- Keep air supply and return vents clear of furniture.
- Keep a few inches of space between furniture and walls.
- In cold parts of home, raise temperature and increase air circulation.
- Use dehumidifiers.
- Don't run showers or boil water to humidify your home.
- Avoid using humidifiers unless there is a medical reason to use one.
- Check floors, walls, and windows for water droplets, leaks, flooding, and pooling water.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SEE OR SMELL MOLD

Notify your landlord when you find a moisture problem or indoor mold growth. Common moisture problems like pipe leaks, roof leaks, sewage back-ups, and overflowing toilets, sinks, and bathtubs can become mold problems if they are not addressed quickly.

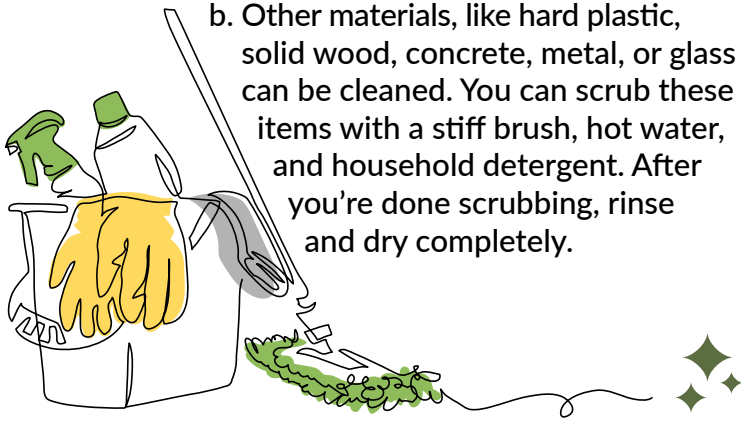
Your landlord is often responsible for controlling moisture problems and removing mold. Sometimes a landlord won't be responsible if it's an issue you caused, like leaving big spills on your carpets for long periods of time. When notifying your landlord of mold, send an email or a letter. You should keep copies of the emails and letters. In your email or letter, request that repairs be completed within 14 days.

If the mold issue cannot be addressed with your landlord or property management, you can contact your city to see what services are available. If the city is unable to help, you may wish to contact an attorney or tenants' organization to discuss legal options.

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HOW TO CLEAN MOLDY MATERIALS

1. Identify the mold problem.
2. Dry moldy surfaces and materials. Drying materials 1 or 2 days after they get wet can decrease mold.
3. Remove or clean mold growth.
 - a. Materials that can get very wet, like carpet, drywall, insulation, and paper should be bagged and thrown away in the trash.
 - b. Other materials, like hard plastic, solid wood, concrete, metal, or glass can be cleaned. You can scrub these items with a stiff brush, hot water, and household detergent. After you're done scrubbing, rinse and dry completely.



HOW TO CLEAN WITH BLEACH

If you use bleach, be careful to protect yourself. Never mix bleach with other chemicals, like ammonia, and only use in an area with lots of air flow. Always protect your eyes and skin from bleach solution by using glasses and gloves.

To clean with bleach, follow these steps:

1. Dilute 1/4 to 1/2 cup bleach per 1 gallon of water.
2. Use a sponge or rag to clean the material or area.
3. Clean up any extra or spilled bleach.
4. Allow at least 30 minutes before rinsing the area.
5. Rinse and dry completely.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Learn more about mold and ways to clean it up by calling the Dakota County Public Health at (952) 891-7500 or email EnvironmentalHealth@co.dakota.mn.us.

You may get free legal help from HomeLine, a nonprofit Minnesota tenant advocacy organization. For assistance call 612-728-5767 or visit <https://homelinemn.org/>.

LawHelpMN is another legal resource that may help renters with mold problems. Learn about their services at <https://www.lawhelpmn.org/self-help-library/housing/repair-problems-when-renting>.

The Minnesota Department of Health has information to help tenants better understand the hazards associated with indoor mold growth and the options available to resolve mold problems.

Learn more at <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/air/mold/renters.html>.