

News



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Connecticut Department of Public Health

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Connecticut Department of Public Health Responds to the Institute of Medicine's Report on Mold

Hartford – The Connecticut Department of Public Health today announced that they support the conclusions of the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) recent report on moisture and mold in buildings.

On May 25, 2004, IOM released a comprehensive report on moisture and mold in buildings. The report concludes that mold in buildings can cause mild symptoms that are generally reversible and in some sensitive individuals can cause more severe reactions such as asthma attacks in individuals with existing asthma. However, the report does not support the idea that mold in homes is a major environmental health threat. In addition, the report states that the term "toxic mold" is not appropriate and that molds should be considered similar in their ability to cause health effects.

DPH supports the conclusion of the IOM report and wants to emphasize some important points for Connecticut residents. "Excessive mold can be a health hazard to some individuals but people need not panic if mold is suspected in a home or building," said Brian Toal, who directs DPH's efforts in indoor air evaluations. "Common sense is the best rule of thumb when dealing with mold and moisture issues," he continued.

If you suspect a mold problem in the home, the most important step to take is to find the source of moisture. Mold is present everywhere in small amounts but can only grow into a problem if there is excessive moisture/water in a building. "We do not recommend testing air or material for mold in most instances", said Mr. Toal. "Testing will usually only tell you what you already generally know, can be very costly, and usually does not influence the course of action," he stated.

The homeowner can handle many mold problems in the home safely with some simple precautions. If the problem is extensive, professional help may be needed. A home inspector can usually help identify the water source, and a general cleanup/restoration company can handle the water cleanup. If the mold contamination is extensive, a contractor experienced in mold remediation who will follow the proper precautions, should be contacted.

DPH has a Mold in the Home fact sheet and links to mold resources at:

http://www.dph.state.ct.us/BCH/EEOH/mold_problems.htm

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