

MONMOUTH COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH – MOLD BASICS

As New Jersey continues to rebuild from Superstorm Sandy, the New Jersey Department of Health has partnered with state, local, and federal partners to develop a pamphlet to guide New Jersey homeowners on mold and mold remediation. Molds are found in virtually every environment and can be detected, indoors and outdoors, year round. Mold growth is encouraged by warm and humid conditions. Outdoors they can be found in shady, damp areas or places where leaves or other vegetation is decomposing. Indoors they can be found where humidity levels are high, such as basements or showers. Although molds are common in our environment, mold may become a problem when it grows inside homes. These guidelines were developed to better inform homeowners on how to ensure their homes are cleaned and remediated properly to avoid mold problems now and in the future. Molds can cause staining of walls and ceilings and can affect building components causing property damage. Exposure to mold can cause nasal and throat irritation, coughing or wheezing, eye irritation, or, in some cases, skin irritation.

The pamphlet addresses a number of topics including mold-related health concerns, how to inspect for mold and tools and techniques for clean-up. For example:

- If mold is visually apparent, resources should be used to correct any moisture problems and clean up mold contamination rather than testing
- For smaller areas less than 10 square feet that have been affected by mold growth, a homeowner or business owner may be capable of performing the work, but for larger areas greater than 100 square feet, a qualified contractor who has experience in mold or environmental contamination may be required.
- Those performing remediation work need to be protected with gloves, a respirator, protective clothing and goggles.

The pamphlet also includes checklists on inspection services and mold remediation to help guide residents in steps they should take when addressing mold problems in their home.

The guidance also contains tips and questions to ask when hiring a consultant or remediation contractor that will help residents evaluate these professionals.

Residents can receive copies of the pamphlet by calling the Monmouth County Health Department at 732-431-7456 or visit the Monmouth County Health Department website at http://nj.gov/health/er/hurricane_recovery_resources.shtml.