

INFORMATION ON MOLD

Mold Inspections – **Are NOT** performed by **Howard County Inspections Personnel**

The Howard County Department of Inspections, Licenses and Permits periodically receives questions concerning mold and requests for the inspection and/or testing for mold(s).

The Howard County Government Department of Inspections, Licenses and Permits **DOES NOT** inspect for the presence of mold inside rental properties nor do we have the authority to require mold testing. **There currently are no agencies within Howard County Government with employees certified for the inspection and/or identification of mold.**

Although, the Howard County Rental Housing Property Maintenance Code does not address identifying mold, the Howard County Rental Housing Inspectors may be able to assist you with identifying the source of any water entering habitable portions of your rental dwelling which could be a violation of the Property Maintenance Code (e.g. broken pipes, improper grading/drainage, clogged condensate lines, turning off A/C in unit, etc.). You may contact them at 410-313-1830.

There are commercially available Environmental Air Quality companies who can test for mold using specialized equipment and trained personnel. Check the telephone directory or the web for local businesses. Keep in mind that you must pay for their services.

Mold

There are currently no U.S. Government Regulations concerning mold. There are however, recommendations concerning mold remediation provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Recommendation can be found at the EPA site on the World Wide Web (www). Their site is <http://www.epa.gov/mold/moldresources.html>

The following is an excerpt from the EPA website: **Ten Things You Should Know About Mold**

- Potential health effects and symptoms associated with mold exposures include allergic reactions, asthma, and other respiratory complaints.
- There is no practical way to eliminate all molds and mold spores in the indoor environment; the way to control indoor mold growth is to control moisture.
- If mold is a problem in your home or school, you must clean up the mold and eliminate sources of moisture.
- Fix the source of the water problem or leak to prevent mold growth.
- Reduce indoor humidity (to 30–60%) to decrease mold growth by: venting bathrooms, dryers, and other moisture-generating sources to the outside; using air conditioners and dehumidifiers; increasing ventilation; and using exhaust fans whenever cooking, dishwashing, and cleaning.
- Clean and dry any damp or wet building materials and furnishings within 24–48 hours to prevent mold growth.
- Clean mold off hard surfaces with water and detergent, and dry completely. Absorbent materials such as ceiling tiles, that are moldy, may need to be replaced.
- Prevent condensation: Reduce the potential for condensation on cold surfaces (i.e., windows, piping, exterior walls, roof, or floors) by adding insulation.
- In areas where there is a perpetual moisture problem, do not install carpeting (i.e., by drinking fountains, by classroom sinks, or on concrete floors with leaks or frequent condensation).
- Molds can be found almost anywhere; they can grow on virtually any substance, providing moisture is present. There are molds that can grow on wood, paper, carpet, and foods.