

Mold Outside Your Home

Why Mold Grows on your Home

Mold is present everywhere – both indoors and outside. There are more than 100,000 species of mold and at least 1,000 are common in the United States. Growths of mold can be seen as discoloration, in a variety of colors on exterior walls, decks, under hangs and roofs.

Molds flourish on organic or contaminated surfaces that are dark or shady, when temperatures are warm, between 77 and 86, (but growth will occur anywhere above freezing to nearly 100 degrees), and where there is moisture. Moisture can come from the host material, or its surface, or can be in the form of high humidity in the air.

Shaded areas are more likely to be affected by mold than areas that receive a lot of sunlight.

Providing adequate ventilation around the home is important. Get rid of damp soil. Trim away or remove vegetation that is growing too close to the foundation, roof or deck. Keeping the roof clean, and removing all debris that retains moisture also will help inhibit mold growth.

Wood Shingles, Decks, and Untreated Wood

Scrub surfaces with a solution of 1 quart of chlorine bleach, 1 ounce of detergent, and 3 quarts of water. Cover any plants in the area to prevent damage to them. Rinse thoroughly. Use this solution out of direct sunlight. If the stain persists, increase the concentration of bleach to water and re-treat.

Sealants are available for clean dry wood that penetrate the surface and prevent moisture from entering, thus inhibiting mold growth.

Roofs- Asphalt Shingles

To clean mold off a roof, use a mixture of three parts chlorine bleach to 1 part water at the rate of 1 gallon per 30 to 50 square feet. NOTE. Chlorine bleach can damage some roofing materials so test before using. It can also damage metal rain gutters and plants beneath, so be cautious of runoff, and rinse well. Drape plastic over plants. Start at the peak of the roof, and work in strips toward the eaves.

There are commercial fungicidal products that will inhibit mold growth but these may be toxic to humans and pets. Follow label instructions exactly.

This fact sheet provides information from the Purdue Cooperative Extension Service.

For more information contact your local county Extension office. Summer, 2005

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