

Mold Prevention

What is Mold?

Mold is a class of fungi that are frequently discovered on damp or wet building surfaces. Mold grows on a wide range of building materials and fabrics and are found in the soil.

How Does Mold Get into a Building?

Spores of mold and fungi are everywhere. They grow naturally outdoors and seek out areas with water damage, high and sustained humidity, or dampness. They also require moisture to thrive. The following are typical sources of high indoor moisture content that can result in mold issues:

- Roof leaks from damaged roofing materials, standing water due to poor drainage, or blocked gutters
- Storm-driven rain through window frames, exterior walls, or door assemblies
- Leaking or broken water pipes, sewer back-ups, or overflows
- Damp basements due to poorly managed rainwater drainage or inadequate air circulation
- Condensation on cold surfaces
- Poor drainage of condensate that collects in HVAC drain pans

How Can Mold Be Prevented?

- The key to preventing and stopping indoor mold amplification is to control excessive moisture and condensation. It is important to keep the vulnerable areas in the building clean and dry.
- In general, mold will not grow indoors without water, dampness, or excessive moisture. Report all plumbing leaks and moisture problems to FD&O at workcontrol@sjsu.edu.

Mold Prevention Tips

- Maintain indoor relative humidity levels below 60%. The ideal humidity levels are between 30 and 50% (US EPA).
- Make sure that the ground slopes downward and away from the building foundation.
- Check the landscape irrigation to ensure the water spray pattern is not contacting the exterior walls.
- Keep the air conditioner drip pans and drain lines clean, flowing properly, and unobstructed.
- Ensure that cold storage door latches and gaskets are in good condition.
- In case of floods or leaking pipes, remove any standing water immediately.
- Dry out and clean water-damaged materials, or if heavily damaged, remove and replace them.
- Discard materials that are wet for more than 48 hours since they are likely to produce mold growth.
- Report extensive water damage to your supervisor.
- Report any water leaks to FDO at workcontrol@sjsu.edu.



References

- AIHA: [Mold Resource Center](#)
- CDC: [Dampness and Mold in Buildings](#)
- OSHA: [A Brief Guide to Mold in the Workplace](#)