



UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHERN COLORADO

Environmental Health and Safety

**MOLD ASSESSMENT AND WATER
INTRUSION GUIDELINES**

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Mold Assessment and Water Intrusion Guidelines

I. Mold Introduction

Molds are forms of fungi, part of the natural environment and around us at all times. Mold's implication to poor indoor air quality and the potential for adverse health effects have been covered in the media. However, the real risks surrounding exposure to mold growth are incomplete and often times controversial.

Molds play a role in nature by aiding in the decomposition of organic matter. During organic decomposition, molds proliferate by producing and releasing spores which are invisible to the naked eye. These airborne spores passively land on surfaces and can begin growing if conditions are right. When outdoors, the microbial decomposition process is not typically considered a health hazard due to dilution in the atmosphere; however, mold growth indoors can be of concern due to greater spore accumulation in indoor air and the potential for inhalation.

II. Health Affects

Molds do not affect all people and there is wide variability in how people react to mold exposure. Health symptoms are often noted more severely and quickly in infants, the elderly, and those persons with weakened immune systems or preexisting respiratory conditions (e.g. allergies, asthma). However, a sensitization to mold can develop if mold growth in an indoor environment is left unaddressed.

It is important to note that each specific mold species needs optimal growing conditions, including light cycles, moisture content and an organic growing medium. Water removal and drying of wetted building materials within 48 hours is likely to prevent mold growth.

III. Action to be Taken

In the event of water release or mold concern (musty odor), contact Facilities Management at (970) 351-2446 or by email at service.center@unco.edu.

In case of an emergency, such as a broken or leaking pipe, after normal working hours, contact University Police at (970) 351-2245.