

MOLD FAQs

Why is mold growing in my barracks?

As of 3 September 2010

Molds are part of the natural environment. Outdoors, molds play a part in nature by breaking down dead organic matter such as fallen leaves and dead trees, but indoors, mold growth should be avoided. Molds reproduce by means of tiny spores; the spores are invisible to the naked eye and float through outdoor and indoor air. Mold may begin growing indoors when mold spores land on surfaces that are wet. **There are many types of mold, and none of them will grow without water or moisture.**

How do I get rid of mold?

It is impossible to get rid of all mold and mold spores indoors; some mold spores will be found floating through the air and in house dust. The mold spores will not grow if moisture is not present. Indoor mold growth can and should be prevented or controlled by controlling moisture indoors. If there is mold growth in your barracks, you must clean up the mold **and** fix the water problem. If you clean up the mold, but don't fix the water problem, then, most likely, the mold problem will come back.

Who should do the Cleanup?

Who should do the cleanup depends on a number of factors. One consideration is the size of the mold problem.

If the moldy area is less than about 10 square feet (less than roughly a 3 ft. by 3 ft. patch), in most cases, **YOU** can handle the job yourself if the material is non porous.

Do's and Don'ts

- 1. Do** Call-in or fix leaky plumbing and leaks in the building as soon as possible.
- 2. Don't** Leave outside doors and windows open while air conditioning your barracks. The warm moist air from outside will condense on cool interior walls and promote mold growth.
- 3. Do** Watch for condensation and wet spots. Call-in or fix source(s) of moisture problem(s) as soon as possible.
- 4. Don't** Block AC vents to regulate room temperature. This will throw the AC unit out of balance and create a moisture problem which helps mold to grow.
- 5. Do** keep heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) drip pans clean, flowing properly, and unobstructed.
- 6. Don't** mix Clorox and ammonia when cleaning mold. This will generate toxic gases and cause serious harm to you and others. Use detergents or general purpose cleaning agent to clean mold.
- 7. Do** submit work request to DPW to vent moisture-generating appliances, such as dryers, to the outside.
- 8. Do** report all plumbing leaks and other water problems as soon as possible. Dry all items completely.
- 9. Do** scrub mold off hard surfaces with detergent or any general purpose cleaning agent and dry completely. Use gloves and goggles while cleaning.
- 10. Do** keep your windows closed and the thermostat during the A/C season at 74 degrees or higher. Never turn off the HVAC system or unplug appliances this includes NTC/JRTC deployments, TDYs, etc. When in doubt contact your respective barracks management team. The setting of your thermostat below 74 degrees will lead to the growth of mold, especially if the occupants/occupants are gone for an extended period of time, e.g. NTC, JRTC, TDT, leave. If it is determined that this is the cause of the mold and the room must be remediated the occupant/occupants can be held financially liable for the remediation cost.
- 11. Do** wipe off excess moisture in areas that you can safely reach, such as A/C vents, walls and ceilings in bathrooms and furniture.
- 12. Do** check to insure your bathroom ventilation/exhaust fan is operational by placing a single sheet of paper or several folds of tissue up to the vent and if operational the ventilation fan should hold the paper/tissue in place. If not operational report to your respective Barracks Management Team so a service order can be initiated.
- 13. Do** insure wet clothes and other wet items, such as furniture, are promptly cleaned and dried, within 24 hours.
- 14. Do** place a work order immediately if the A/C's drip pan overflows. The drip pan is located in the large register where the air filter is located.
- 15. Do** call the FSBP Mold Officer at 287-4884, if you have any questions or concerns with mold.