



Mold Fact Sheet

The University of Maryland is committed to providing an environment that is free of recognized hazards and to investigate concerns related to mold growth on building materials.

Why does mold grow on building materials?

Mold spores are always present in both the indoor and outdoor environment. Mold grows best in warm, damp, and humid conditions and reproduces by spores. Spores can remain viable under harsh environmental conditions, including dry conditions, which normally do not support mold growth.

The growth of mold in an indoor environment requires three basic elements: food, water, and climate. Buildings provide food sources (primarily wood and paper) for mold to grow. The key to controlling mold growth on materials in the indoor environment is moisture control. This includes maintaining moderate relative humidity levels indoors, and responding promptly to water intrusion. Building occupants should report all floods, water intrusion, and suspect visible mold growth on materials to the appropriate number below for response by building management personnel:

Facilities Management Customer Response Center 301-405-2222

Residential Facilities Work Requests 301-314-WORK (9675)

Dining Services Work Requests 301-314-8086

Are there any regulations regarding mold?

To date, there are no regulations directly governing the presence of mold or mold spores in buildings in the State of Maryland. There are also no health standards for concentrations of mold spores in the indoor air.

Professionals agree that the presence of visible mold on indoor building materials is an unacceptable condition, and should be remediated. Environmental Safety, Sustainability & Risk (ESSR) personnel assist building management to identify the source(s) of moisture and visible mold growth and develop a scope of work to correct the source(s) of moisture, as well as to clean and/or remove materials according to industry guidelines.

How does mold affect people?

Exposure to mold can cause allergy-like symptoms (nasal stuffiness, eye irritation) and/or skin irritation in some people. Depending on a person's sensitivity, these reactions could be more or less severe. The presence of mold may also exacerbate asthma. Building occupants who are concerned about a possible reaction to mold in the indoor environment are encouraged to consult with their physician.

What can I do if I'm concerned about mold?

If you are concerned about mold in your workplace or living space, place a service request with ESSR for a consultation at the following link. You may also call ESSR at 301-405-3960.

ESSR service request link: <https://www.essr.umd.edu/risk/occupational-safety-health/indoor-air-quality>