



What is mold?

Mold is a type of fungus that forms and spreads on damp organic matter, and it is present both indoors and outdoors. Mold has the potential to grow indoors when there is a high level of moisture present, such as around leaks in roofs, windows, or pipes, or in areas where there has been flooding. When excessive moisture accumulates in buildings or on building materials, mold can grow on surfaces such as wood, paper, carpet, and insulation.

In addition to property damage, mold can impair the indoor air quality of your home and cause a variety of health issues for sensitive individuals, specifically those with asthma. Mold produces allergens and irritants which can cause a stuffy nose, sore throat, coughing, burning eyes, or skin rash. Inhaling or touching mold may cause allergic reactions. If you experience any symptoms, please contact your primary care provider and make an appointment to discuss your concerns.

For more information on the potential health effects of mold, please see the [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\) website](#)

Mildew is classified as mold and often lives on shower walls, windowsills, and other places where moisture levels are high. It is typically powdery, fluffy, and light in color whereas other types of molds are thick and dark. Generally, the health or property damage effects of mildew are less severe than those caused by other types of mold.

How does mold grow?



Mold grows in places with significant moisture or humidity as it needs a consistent water source.



Mold needs a source of organic matter to grow, such as wood products, drywall, or fabric.



Mold grows best in temperatures between 32- and 120-degrees Fahrenheit.

What are the tenant’s responsibilities surrounding mold, mildew, or potential mold?

- ✓ It is the tenant's responsibility to initiate a maintenance request and immediately report any active water leaks or signs of suspected moisture to their PPV Property Manager (PM).
- ✓ Tenants are responsible for keeping their home clean and maintaining standard upkeep per their lease. This includes cleaning up surface occurrences of mildew that may be found in bathrooms.

Please see Tenant Tips for Mold Prevention on page 2 for ways that you can reduce the likelihood of mold occurrences in your home



What are the responsibilities of the PPV PM and the Military Housing Office (MHO)?

PPV PM	MHO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provides walkthrough inspection of a tenant's home during their move-in ✓ Advises tenants of their responsibility to prevent and immediately report any conditions conducive to mold growth ✓ Provides tenants with clear reporting procedures so problems can be recorded and addressed in a timely manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ As the tenant advocate, applies the environmental health and safety standards for managing mold and coordinates with maintenance personnel to resolve the issue and ensure tenant satisfaction ✓ Becomes involved with a concern if the Dispute Resolution Process (DRP) is initiated due to the PPV PM not resolving an issue

How do I prevent mold growth?

Per the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 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. Mold spores will only grow if moisture is present. The best way to prevent mold growth indoors is to control moisture. Identifying and repairing water leaks as quickly as possible, ensuring proper air circulation, and maintaining a clean and clutter free home all contribute towards preventing mold growth in your home. ***It's simple – control moisture and you'll control mold growth.***

Tenant Tips for Mold Prevention

Preparation

- ✓ Be an active participant during your move-in inspection with the PPV PM. Look for evidence of water damage, visible mildew, or mold growth
- ✓ Report all plumbing leaks and moisture problems immediately to your PPV PM
- ✓ Check hidden locations for mold, such as ceiling and floor vents

You can control mold growth in your home by:

- ✓ Controlling humidity levels indoors
- ✓ Regardless of the outside temperature, opening windows in your housing unit for 15 minutes once a month to improve air circulation
- ✓ Ventilating shower, laundry, and cooking areas
- ✓ Running your ceiling fans to increase air circulation and/or setting the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) unit fan to 'Auto'
- ✓ Checking and changing your HVAC filters per directions from your PPV PM
- ✓ Reporting leaky roofs, windows, or pipes to your PPV PM and working with them to ensure the problem and leak source is fixed
- ✓ Thoroughly cleaning and drying the problem area



How do I spot mold in my home?

Generally, mold may be recognized either by sight or smell. You can refer to the Appendix for photo examples of molds and mildew.

- Mold usually appears as a distinctly colored woolly mat. For example, mildew is white, gray, or light brown, and is one of the most common molds in a household.
- Mold often produces a musty, earthy smell.

If you know there has been a leak or water damage, if you can smell musty odor, or if other tenants are reporting health problems, there may be mold hidden in hard-to-see places. These include locations such as the back side of dry wall, wallpaper, paneling, the top side of ceiling tiles, or the underside of carpets and pads. Initiate a maintenance request and contact your PPV PM immediately if you suspect hidden mold.

What should I do if there is a mold issue in my residence?

If you have a mold problem, it is important to act quickly by initiating a maintenance request and contacting your PPV PM. Mold will cause damage to whatever items it grows on, and the longer it grows, the more damage it can cause.

It's important to remember:





The key to minimizing mold is moisture control.



Water-damaged areas and items should be dried within 24-48 hours to prevent growth.

How do I clean mold or mildew in my home?

If mold is growing in your home, you need to contact your PPV PM immediately for help to address the issue. Maintenance personnel will inspect potential mold occurrences and assist in cleanup and address any associated moisture problems if needed. If the substance is mildew, it is your responsibility to cleanup common occurrences, such as those found in bathrooms.

Mold		Do not self-clean. Contact your PPV PM!
Mildew		You can self-clean, using the tips below

Below are a few tips for self-cleaning:

- ✓ Mildew can be removed from hard surfaces with EPA-registered antimicrobial cleaning products
- ✓ If EPA-registered antimicrobial cleaning products are not available, soap and water, or a bleach solution of no more than 1 cup of household laundry bleach in 1 gallon of water, can be used as cleaning products to clean up surface-level mildew
- ✓ Scrub mildew off hard surfaces with your chosen cleaner and water
- ✓ Dry all items completely



Understanding Mold in Your Home

- ✓ Absorbent or porous materials, such as ceiling tiles and carpet, may have to be removed if they have heavy occurrences of mildew. Mildew can grow on or fill in the empty spaces and crevices of porous materials, so the mildew may be difficult or impossible to remove completely. Work with your PPV PM to identify how to replace anything that is their responsibility.

If you clean up the mildew, but don't fix the water problem, then the mildew problem will likely come back.

Where can I find more information on mold in my residence?

The EPA and CDC have helpful resources on how to prevent and spot mold occurring in your home:

- ✓ EPA: [Mold Cleanup in Your Home](#)
- ✓ EPA: [Mold and Your Home](#)
- ✓ CDC: [Basic Facts about Mold and Dampness](#)
- ✓ CDC: [Health Problems Related to Dampness and Mold](#)
- ✓ CDC: [You Can Control Mold](#)



Appendix (Photos of Different Types of Mold)

Photos are sourced and owned by EPA.

To view additional photos, [visit the EPA Mold Gallery](#)



Mold on drywall under leaky sink



Mold on air seal on sliding glass door



Mold surrounding air conditioning vent



Mildew found on bathroom grout