

The Mold or The Mold Consultant?



Conflicting interests and misled clients are becoming commonplace in the Mold Consulting industry. Although there are credible, knowledgeable, and ethical consultants to select from, many companies profit significantly from exploiting clients' fears and general unawareness.

Mold inspection proficiency tips

Research:

It is imperative to check referrals, references, and credentials. While some certifications reflect extensive training, others can be obtained with negligible training and no competency testing.

Thoroughness:

Be wary of inspectors that quickly arrive at conclusions, especially if the proposed remedy is costly and involves an affiliated company. Investigation should include thorough visual inspection, history of facility's problems, health of occupants, and moisture and temperature readings. The abatement contractor must be independent of the air sampling vendor.

Testing Limitations:

It is generally rare for mold testing to be recommended by neutral parties. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, "in most cases, if visible mold growth is present, sampling is unnecessary."

Testing can be a valuable tool in detecting hidden mold. Remediation should not be based on test results alone; therefore, scrutinize any inspection that bases mold remediation on sampling alone.

Key facts on indoor mold

1. Air testing for mold has not been validated by scientific agencies or studies. No standardization exists for sampling, testing, reference ranges, or interpretation of results. Results from the same report are often interpreted differently and therefore, testing in general remains highly subjective.
2. Species identification of mold in an indoor environment is generally unnecessary. Thus, tape sampling and subsequent identification of mold species is often a waste of money and resources.
3. There is no evidence in the medical literature to suggest that any one species of mold is more poisonous than another, when present on surfaces in an indoor environment.
4. Visual identification is generally all that is necessary to determine presence of mold on surfaces.
5. Mold requires moisture in order to grow. Locating and remediating the moisture intrusion is paramount to prevent continued growth and should remain the core focus of the process.
6. Mold and mold spores are all around us in most indoor and outdoor environments, despite whether mold growth is visible.

If mold samples are taken, indoor and outdoor samples should be compared to determine the level of mold inside the tested space. Clearance samples should also be taken after clean-up or abatement of mold presence.

In summary, the health effects of mold exposure are generally confined to mild respiratory irritation and potential triggering of symptoms in individuals with asthma and certain allergies. Most testing practices used by mold inspection and remediation companies are largely wasteful and unnecessary.

Useful Resources:

[Statement on Building Dampness, Mold and Health](#)

[Molds in the Environment](#)

[The Facts about Mold](#)

