

# ST. CROIX ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

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## Basic Mold Cleanup Steps

1. The key to mold control is moisture control.
2. Scrub mold off hard surfaces with detergent and water, and dry completely.
3. Fix plumbing leaks and other water problems as soon as possible. Dry all items completely.
4. Absorbent or porous materials, such as ceiling tiles and carpet, may have to be thrown away if they become moldy. Mold can grow on or fill in the empty spaces and crevices of porous materials, so the mold may be difficult or impossible to remove completely.
5. Avoid exposing yourself or others to mold. Wearing protective clothing and mouth cover may be appropriate.
6. Do not paint or caulk a moldy surface. Clean up the mold and dry the surfaces before painting. Paint applied over mold is likely to peel.
7. If you are unsure about how to clean an item, you may wish to consult a specialist.

## Ten Things You Should Know About Mold

1. Potential health effects and symptoms associated with mold exposures include allergic reactions, asthma, and other respiratory complaints.
2. There is no practical way to eliminate all mold and mold spores in the indoor environment; the way to control indoor mold growth is to control moisture.
3. If mold is a problem in your home or school, you must clean up the mold and eliminate sources of moisture.
4. Fix the sources of the water problem or leak to prevent mold growth.
5. Reduce indoor humidity (to 30-60%) to decrease mold growth by venting bathrooms, dryers, and other moisture-generating sources to the outside; using air conditioners and de-humidifiers; increasing ventilation; and using exhaust fans whenever cooking, dishwashing and cleaning.
6. Clean and dry any damp or wet building materials and furnishings within 24-48 hours to prevent mold growth.
7. Clean mold off hard surfaces with water and detergent, and dry completely. Absorbent materials such as ceiling tiles, that are moldy, may need to be replaced.
8. Prevent condensation: Reduce the potential for condensation on cold surfaces (i.e., windows, piping, exterior walls, roof, or floors) by adding insulation.
9. In areas where there is a perpetual moisture problem, do not install carpeting.
10. Molds can be found almost anywhere; they can grow on virtually any substance, providing moisture is present. There are molds that can grow on wood, paper, carpet, and foods.

The St. Croix Environmental Office cannot your mold, but can provide you with moisture readings throughout your home.

### References

What are the basic mold cleanup steps? Indoor Air Quality, EPA Online.

What are ten things I need to know about mold? Indoor Air Quality, EPA Online.