

## CONTROLLING MOLD

“ The only way to get rid of mold is to completely remove (abate) it. Since it is part of our environment and we cannot abate everything, we must try to control it by controlling what it needs to live.” (Dr. Larry Wallace, President and CEO of RESQ Safety & Environmental Services, and a leading authority on mold related issues)

That means:            1. Food            2. Air            3. Water

Control *any one of those three items* and you can keep mold from growing and reproducing. Which one to control? Whichever is easiest (usually removing the water source and drying out the environment).

Remember, mold is a biological organism (a fungus), not a mineral like lead or asbestos. It can always come back when conditions are right. Spores can sit around for centuries and sprout when they finally get nourishment. Good housekeeping and good preventive maintenance are key to keeping it “under control”.

Not all mold is harmful - but anything can become toxic if over-exposure occurs. There are over 100,000 species of mold, of which about 80 are considered toxic, of which only 50 are considered “problematic”. Three or four species are commonly problematic.

### Some Good Molds

- { Ingredients in Cheeses
- ☒ Ingredients in Medicines
- { The Reason Aged Beef is Tender
- ☒ Carbonation in Some Beverages
- { The Reason Bread Rises

### Some Mold Facts

- ☒ All molds are fungi, not all fungi is mold.
- { Mold is a natural part of our atmosphere.
- ☒ Mold is a natural part of our ecosystem.
  - { Mold consumes organic material.
  - ☒ Mold does not use or need sunlight.
- { Mold comes in lots of colors that can change due to food sources.

### Some prevention / control tips:

Repair leaks in roofs, foundations, appliances, bathroom fixtures, plumbing immediately { Insulate cold water lines and make sure condensation drains from HVAC and refrigeration units { Do NOT shut down HVAC system for the summer in unused buildings { Learn to recognize and clean up mold when first growth begins (remember to attack food, water or air source or it will return) { Clean *under* floor mats { UV Light can be used in some areas { Use quality air filters and change as directed { Keep air intake vents clean and dry { Document all activities to show due diligence.

### Solutions for clean up:

Indoors..... 3 parts water + 1 part hydrogen peroxide (like the drug store sells). Vapors are not as harmful as bleach.

Outdoors.... 3 parts water + 1 part chlorine bleach. Increase to 5 parts water if people are nearby.

Food Prep...3 parts water + 1 part white vinegar.

Solutions may remove colors of paint or underlying material - test a hidden spot first.

Commercial biocides and fungicides (like what's mixed with paint) will also work - follow label directions.