

The Facts On How to Prevent Mold



**OCCUPATIONAL AND
ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY**

Mold and mildew thrive in warm and humid environments and can be found everywhere, outside as well as inside. There are thousands of species of mold and all have different requirements for growth including - temperature, water (moisture and humidity) and a food source. Spores are brought inside through open doors or windows, on shoes, clothing, and backpacks. There are several ways to prevent mold and mildew from growing in your dorm room or apartment.

What I Can Do to Improve IAQ & Prevent Mold

- Keep your space clean and vacuum or sweep at least once a week.
- If there is a spill, clean it up immediately and make sure the area is dried completely.
- Communicate any leaks to Facilities immediately to reduce the chance of mold growth.
- Dispose of garbage promptly and properly.
- Ensure HVAC system in the space is properly maintained.
- Try to keep your space clutter free. Clutter traps and holds dust.
- Do not block air vents or grilles and keep clean of dust.
- Maintain the temperature of your space. Keep it at a comfortable temperature - not too hot or too cold.
- Store food properly. Routinely clean inside and outside fridges and other food storing areas.
- Try to avoid storing items in cardboard boxes, opt for securely closed plastic or metal containers.

How to Clean Up Mold & Mildew

- Small amounts of mold and mildew found on vents, around windows or on chairs and furniture can be cleaned up by the occupant.
- Use a wet clean up method- a damp cloth with quaternary ammonium products such as a Clorox wipe.
- Do not use a cloth only dampened with water.
- Throw wipes and clean- up materials in the trash and remove the trash from the room.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

- **Water Intrusion-** IMMEDIATELY report leaks or other water intrusion to Facilities. Include what you know (source, damaged materials, affected areas, etc.).
- **Sewage Backflows-** IMMEDIATELY report sewage backflows to Facilities and OES. Do **NOT** attempt to clean or remove affected materials.

For a more detailed IAQ information visit the link:

<https://www.clemson.edu/research/oes/ihsafety/indoorairqualiy.html>

Remember The 3 C's

- **Cleaning**
 - Cleanliness in your space can assist in improving IAQ and promoting a living environment free of mold, pests, and insects.
 - Hang damp or wet towels, bathmats, clothing, or other items immediately and allow drying completely. Do not place wet items on wooden furniture or closets.
 - Wipe down vents and dust your room regularly.
 - Do not allow mildew to accumulate in your baths and shower stalls.
 - Cleaning of community bathrooms is the responsibility of University Facilities Custodial Services. Report any mold or mildew immediately to your RA or other Housing staff members.
- **Climate**
 - KEEP WINDOWS CLOSED when air conditioning is on
 - Follow Facilities guidance for proper temperature setting in your space, do not tamper with the HVAC unit (including changing fan from AUTO to ON or reprogramming the equipment to operate outside designed parameters).
 - Use the exhaust fans in bathrooms to remove the moisture created by bathing. Use bathmats to absorb water after showering or bathing.
- **Communication**
 - Communicate any leaks or water intrusion to Facilities.

Do You Have an IAQ Problem?

- **For temperature, odor or smell complaints, suspected water leaks or visible mold:**
 - Report concern to Facilities through the work order system.
 - Facilities will respond within 24 hours of notification and refer the complaint to OES if they cannot remedy the problem.
 - OES will interview affected building occupants.

Mold Home Test Kits

Mold home test kits are not accurate since mold is present both inside and outside. Mold plates are designed to grow mold spores and since there are mold spores in the air everywhere all the time, you should expect to get mold spores growing on the plates. This is not indicative of poor indoor air quality.