

## Controlling Moisture in Your Home or Business

Water damage in a home is a serious situation that needs to be addressed as quickly as possible. If the water is cleaned up and dried out within 24-48 hours after a leak, in most cases mold will not grow.

### **Actions to take as soon as you discover a water problem**

- Accelerate the drying process with water extraction vacuums, fans, and dehumidifiers
  - Remove all wet cellulose tiles, ceiling tiles, and fiberglass insulation
  - Wet paneling should be pried from the wall for drying
  - Wet wallboard (drywall, gypsum board) may be dried in place if there is no obvious swelling and the seams are intact. If not, remove and replace it. Ventilate the wall cavity if possible
  - Freeze important papers (in frost-free freezer or meat locker) or freeze dry
  - Pull up wet carpets, rugs, and carpet pads. Vinyl and treated or finished wood surfaces can be cleaned with a mild detergent and clean water and allowed to air dry
- Revisit the water-damage site periodically to make sure that mold hasn't developed.

### **Actions to Take to Keep Outside Water Outside**

- Clean and repair any roof damage immediately. Keep gutters clean and repaired year round.
- Make sure that the ground slopes away from your home foundation

### **Actions to Take to Keep Inside Humidity Low and Prevent Condensation**

- Vent appliances that produce moisture, such as your clothes dryer, dishwasher, stove, kerosene heater (they produce water vapor) to the outside
- Use air-conditioners and/or de-humidifiers
- Run the bathroom fan or open the window when showering
- Increase ventilation or air movement by opening doors and/or windows
- Check behind areas that are always against the walls (for example, the back of a bed's headboard) to make sure air can circulate in that area
- Cover cold surfaces, such as cold water pipes, with insulation
- Increase air temperature

### ***Moisture is the Breeding Ground for Mold and Mold Can Destroy a House and Cause Illnesses***

Disclaimer: The above information is not meant to be a comprehensive or complete list of items necessary to prevent or treat water, moisture, mold, or humidity problems. This information is provided as a courtesy to our clients and is informational only. A qualified contractor may need to be consulted if you are experiencing any problems with moisture, water, humidity, or mold.

*For additional information about moisture control or condensation/humidity issues, contact the EPA Indoor Air Quality Information Clearinghouse at 1-800-438-4318 or visit their web site: [www.epa.gov/iaq/molds](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds)*