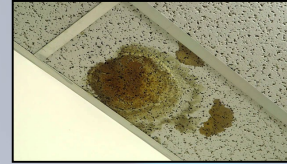


# JULY

## Safety Topic: **MOLD AWARENESS**



### **Where molds are found**

Molds are found almost everywhere in our environment, both outdoors and indoors. Their spores float continually in the air we breathe. Molds can grow on just about any substance, as long as moisture and oxygen are available. Mold growth may occur when excessive moisture accumulates in venues or on venue materials including carpet, ceiling tile, insulation, paper, wallboard, wood, surfaces behind wallpaper, or in heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.

### **The causes of mold at venues**

Common Sources of moisture in venues include plumbing, roof, and window leaks; flooding; condensation on cold surfaces (e.g. pipe sweating); poorly maintained drain pans; and wet foundations due to landscaping or gutters that direct water into or under the venue. Water vapor from unvented or poorly vented areas, combustion appliances, or steam pipes can also create conditions that promote mold growth.

Mold can grow wherever there is dampness. Damp or wet building materials and furnishings should be cleaned and dried within 24 to 48 hours to prevent the growth of mold.

### **The keys to mold prevention is moisture control**

The most important initial step in prevention is a visual inspection. Regular checks of the facility envelope and drainage systems should be made to assure that they are in working order. Identify and, to the extent possible, eliminate sources of dampness, high humidity, and moisture to prevent mold growth. Wet or damp spots and wet, non moldy materials should be dried as soon as possible.

To reduce moisture level in the air, repair leaks, increase ventilation (if outside air is cold and dry) or dehumidify (if outside air is warm and humid).

Other prevention tips include venting moisture-generating appliances in accordance with local code requirements; provide adequate drainage around facilities and sloping ground away from the facilities foundation; and pinpointing areas where leaks have occurred, identifying the causes, and taking preventative action to ensure they do not reoccur.

***For more information see ASM Global Best Practice 02.02.08.***