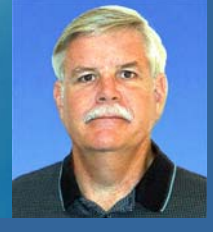
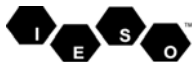


## MOLD

### The Good, the Bad and the Ugly



by: **Rich Schaefer**  
IESO Certified Residential Mold Inspector



Settling the Standard  
for Building Safety™



- **Pathogenic Molds** – which usually produce some type of infection that can cause serious health effects to those with suppressed immune systems.
- **Toxicogenic Molds** – or Mycotoxins which can cause serious health effects in almost anyone.

While only 80 of the currently identified molds are considered toxic, the potential side effects of any home that has a large mold concentration of any type should be avoided.



*A magnified view of Stachybotrys chartarum, one of the causes of "sick building syndrome."*

While various branches of the Government have specifically identified maximum acceptable levels for various contaminants in residential materials, air and water, these levels have not been established for mold. The reasons are numerous, but at a minimum include the lack of clear medical evidence relating mold to health problems; the

fact that mold exists everywhere; the reaction to mold is different from person-to-person; and, probably the most important reason is the highly litigious nature of our society.

In order to respond to the public's need to better understand the issues of mold; the IESO (Indoor Environmental Standards Organization) was formed in 2002 to provide a forum for the development of Standards of Assessment for indoor air environments. In that same year the IESO published the first Standards of Practice for the Assessment of Indoor Environmental Quality, Volume 1, which covers mold sampling and assessment of mold contamination.

These Standards of Practice provide for specific methods to be used to sample areas where visible evidence suggest that a mold may be present, as well as a comprehensive property evaluation to include a thorough examination to look for potential areas of contamination or conditions conducive for the development of a mold colony. The sampling methods include collection using adhesive tape, wetted swabs and air samples.

The resulting report from an accredited laboratory will indicate if mold is present, the

**Mold** has been a documented part of our society since biblical times and is responsible for many positive products in our society, such as Penicillin, cheese, beer and wine, to name a few. Recently a number of high profile cases have galvanized the public into some of the negative aspects of mold.

There are currently over a 100,000 different species of mold identified. Molds are broken into three groups based on the responses that humans may have because of exposure.

- **Allergenic Molds** – which usually do not produce life-threatening health effects.

specific species of mold, and the quantity of mold based on both an indoor and outdoor air sample. Generally a concentration of an identified mold ten times greater indoors than outdoors would lead to the need for a more thorough and expensive investigation by a Certified Environmental Air Quality Investigator.

In most cases a low cost Level I Assessment to confirm or refute an area identified with what appears to be a visible mold, or a more comprehensive property evaluation (Level II Assessment) is all that is needed to validate or eliminate the concern.



*Stachybotrus c. growing in the attic of a Phoenix area home.*

AccuPro Inspection Services is certified by the IESO to offer Level I and Level II Mold Assessment. We utilize Aerotech Laboratories for sample analysis. Aerotech is a nationally certified environmental microbiology lab that offers a 48 to 72 hour turn-around on samples and a complete report of results.

Should you be concerned about the possibility of mold contamination in a potential new residence or in your existing residence, please give us a call. An independent scientific evaluation can eliminate your concern or provide the information you need to alleviate the problem.

## Where Does Mold Come From?

Mold requires three things to grow: moisture; a source of food; and a surface to grow on. Cellulose (wood and paper products, including drywall and fiberglass insulation covering) provide an excellent food source for mold. With this in mind, the most common causes for mold growth in a home are the following:

- Wet lumber used in new construction
- Leaks in roof
- Leaky plumbing
- Poor foundation drainage
- Sewer back-ups
- Floods and water spills

## Warning Signs of Potential Mold Growth

- Visible "mold" (something that looks like mold)
- Musty smell
- Mildew under rugs or carpet
- Evidence of water penetration
- Water stains on interior or exterior walls, door heads or thresholds

## Symptoms of Sick Building Syndrome\*

Symptoms	Sick Building Syndrome
Rhinitis, nasal congestion	YES
Pharyngitis, cough	YES
Wheezing, worsening asthma	YES
Dyspnea	YES
Severe lung disease	YES <sup>1</sup>
Conjunctival irritation	YES
Headache or dizziness	YES
Lethargy, fatigue, malaise	YES
Cognitive impairment, personality change	YES
Myalgia	YES

<sup>1</sup> Hypersensitivity pneumonitis, Legionnaires' Disease.

### CERTIFICATIONS:

IESO Certified Residential Mold Inspector # 12253  
 AZ Certified Home Inspector # 39316  
 ICC Certified Residential Building Inspector # 5224729  
 ICC Certified Electrical Inspector # 5224729

### MEMBERSHIP:

ASHI # 212017  
 Indoor Environmental Standards Organization (IESO) # 12253  
 International Code Council (ICC) # 5224729



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\* *Indoor Air Pollution: An Introduction for Health Professionals*, Co-sponsored by: The American Lung Association (ALA), The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), and The American Medical Association (AMA).