

DEALING WITH
MOLD & MILDEW
IN YOUR
FLOOD DAMAGED
HOME



Before



After



FEMA

THE PROBLEM WITH MOLD

Mildew and molds are fungi - simple microscopic organisms that thrive anywhere there is a moist environment. Molds are a necessary part of the environment; without them, leaves would not decay and aspects of soil enrichment could not take place. It is their ability to destroy organic materials, however, that makes mold a problem for people - in our homes and in our bodies.

Mildew (mold in early stage) and molds grow on wood products, ceiling tiles, cardboard, wallpaper, carpets, drywall, fabric, plants, foods, insulation, decaying leaves and other organic materials.

Mold growths, or colonies, can start to grow on a damp surface within 24 to 48 hours. They reproduce by spores - tiny, lightweight “seeds”- that travel through the air. Molds digest organic material, eventually destroying the material they grow on, and then spread to destroy adjacent organic material. In addition to the damage molds can cause in your home, they can also cause mild to severe health problems. See the HEALTH section to check for possible mold-related health problems.

MOLD IN YOUR HOME?

If your home has **water damage** due to -

- flooding,
- sewage back-up from flooding in the area,
- plumbing or roof leaks,
- damp basement or crawl space,
- overflows from sinks or bathtub, or
- high humidity: steam cooking, dryer vents, humidifiers,

mildew and mold will develop within 24-48 hours of water exposure. Even worse, it will continue to grow until steps are taken to eliminate the source of moisture, and effectively deal with the mold problem.

Use the diagram on the facing page to assess the extent of mold in your home. Then refer to the SOLUTION section for steps you need to take to remedy the problem. Also refer to the PREVENTION section for tips on keeping mold out of your home in the future.

