

## **MOLD CHECKLIST**

***You only have a short time to clean up before mould begins to grow-Less than 48 hours!***

### **AROUND THE HOUSE**

#### Leaks or floods

- Repair leaks right away.
- in the first 48 hours, remove water-damaged items and construction materials to reduce the risk of mould exposure
- Act right away to save items that will be ruined by mould if left longer
- Dry wet flooring, walls, furnishings and other items
- Throw away items that can't be dried
- Pull carpets and furnishings away from wet walls to let air flow and help dry.
- Carpets and underlay that are mouldy should be thrown away

Musty Smell: Can be a result of mould spores and dust in carpets and on floors

- Install a central vacuum vented outdoors or use a HEPA vacuum.
- Vacuum often
- Clean hard floors with a damp mop
- Have family and friends take their shoes off at the door before entering your house

#### Potted Plants

- Reduce the number of potted plants in your house
- Cover the top of the pots with foil, hard plastic or a thick layer of pebbles to keep the moisture and mould in the soil.

#### Furniture

- Do not bring furniture that has been stored in a mouldy place into your house

## Condensation (water) on Windows Damp Wooden Window Frames and Sills

- Lower the indoor moisture levels. Use bathroom fans and kitchen range hood
- Keep window coverings open to move the warm air over the windows
- Heavy curtains or blinds can trap the cold and moisture and cause condensation (water) on your windows
- Dry your window frames and sills daily to keep water from dripping and causing mould to grow
- Make sure furniture does not block the heat from registers or baseboard heaters and keep it from reaching the windows
- Check the rest of the house for moisture sources like leaks, stored firewood and so on.
- If you have tried all the tips to reduce moisture in your home and you still have condensation, your house may need to be replaced.

## **IN THE BASEMENT**

### High Indoor Relative Humidity

- Run a dehumidifier in your basement. A dehumidifier helps to reduce moisture (dampness) in the basement year-round.
- Close the basement windows when the dehumidifier is running. Sweating or condensation (moisture) on pipes
- Check pipes for sweating or condensation
- Dry off pipes and insulate with foam-type insulation

### Musty Smell: Too many items stored with no airflow

- Get rid of clutter and keep the basement tidy so air can move freely, especially near outside walls
- Throw away items you don't need or keep them off the floor
- Never place cardboard boxes directly on basement floor
- Store firewood in a shed or garage, not inside the house
- Remove clothes, blankets, paper products and furniture from the basement. Store these items somewhere else in the house
- If you must use the basement for storing items, use plastic bins with lids instead of cardboard boxes
- Remove any carpets from the basement floor.

\*Too many stored items (clothes, blankets, books, photographs, magazines, boxes) restrict airflow will collect moisture and allow mould to grow

## **EARTH FLOORS**

- Install a moisture barrier (plastic sheeting) over the earth floor.
- Pour a concrete slab over the moisture barrier to protect it

### **Floor Drains**

- Clean the drain in your basement floor. Pour ½ cup of baking soda and ½ cup of water into drain, then add ½ cup vinegar. Cover the drain and let the baking soda and vinegar work for 20 minutes then run plenty of water through the drain. Do this as needed.
- Keep the drain tap filled with water
- Pour mineral oil into the trap to prevent it from drying out
- Replace the drain with an air-sealing type

## **OPEN SUMP PITS**

- Avoid standing (still) water
- Keep your sump pit sealed and covered
- Use a tight-fitting cover (use a piece of metal or you can make a good cover by wrapping plywood with a 0.15-mm [6-mil] polyethylene plastic sheet)
- Make sure the pump is working

## **OUTSIDE**

- Make sure that the slope of the ground around the house drains surface water away from the house
- Make sure that the eavesdrops and downspouts are clear and drain roof water away from the house

## **BEDROOMS**

### **High indoor relative humidity**

- Keep baseboards or heating vents clear to make sure the heat flows
- Leave doors open for good air and heat flow
- Unplug and remove humidifiers

### Musty smell

- Keep beds, bedding and furniture away from outside walls for good airflow.
- Keep closets and storage spaces free and clear, especially if near an outside wall.
- If possible, clean carpets often and well with a HEPA vacuum

## **IN THE BATHROOM**

### High indoor relative humidity

- Remove the moisture by using an exhaust fan when you shower
- Keep the fan running for 30 minutes after you shower
- Make sure the fan exhausts to the outside, not to your attic
- Clean the fan and grille often
- If you don't have an exhaust fan, get one installed in each bathroom
- Keep surfaces clean and dry. Squeegee and dry the walls around the bathtub and shower after showers and baths
- Remove any mould by scrubbing with an unscented detergent and water
- Clean often to prevent mould buildup
- Repair or replace open/cracked/damaged caulking around shower and tub

## **PLUMBING LEAKS**

- If you find any leaks, have them repaired

### Musty Smell

- remove any carpeting in your bathroom
- use a small bath mat to prevent slipping when getting out of the shower or bath. Hang it dry after each use
  
- Remove dirt and hair in drains
- Clean drains often
- Pour a handful of baking soda into the drain. Add a cup of vinegar
- Put the plug in the drain
- Put the plug in the drain
- Let the vinegar and baking soda work for about 20 minutes
- Run fresh water into the drain
- If the drain is plugged, use a small plumbing snake to unplug it

### Condensation (water) on toilet tank or bowl (in the summer months)

- Keep the toilet wiped dry so water does not drip onto the floor
- Check condition of flooring around toilet
- Repair any moisture damage or damaged flooring
- Get an insulated toilet tank

### Water seeping behind walls

#### Cracked or missing caulking

- check often to make sure caulking is in good shape
- replace caulking when cracked or missing or notify the housing manager

## **IN THE KITCHEN**

### High indoor relative humidity

#### Cooking

- if the fan over your stove exhausts outside, use it when you cook to remove the moisture from cooking
- find out how to clean and maintain your exhaust fan
- if you don't have a fan, get an exhaust fan installed that vent to the outside
- do not boil water in uncovered pots for long
- cover boiling pots with a lid when possible

#### Plumbing leaks

- check under the kitchen sink to make sure there are no leaks in the pipes
- if you find any leaks, have them repaired
- keep the area under your sink free and clear

#### Standing (still) water

- Clean the drip pan under the refrigerator. At the same time, vacuum dust from the coils at the back of the refrigerator. For fridges with coils underneath the fridge, you can only vacuum from the front and back of the fridge at the base. Be careful not to damage the coils

#### Unpleasant odours

#### Dirt in drains

- Clean drains often
- Pour handful of baking soda into the drain. Add a cup of vinegar

- Put the plug in the drain
- Let the vinegar and baking soda work for about 20 minutes
- Run fresh water into the drain
- If the drain is plugged, use a small plumbing snake to unplug it

### Garbage

- Take out the garbage daily to prevent odours and spoiling
- Clean garbage containers often

## **IN CLOSETS AND STORAGE**

### Musty Smell: Too many items with no airflow

- Give away clothes or other stored items that you don't use
- Keep your closets and bedroom tidy so it is easier for air to flow and harder for mould to grow
- Limit the amount of storage in closets against the outside walls

## **IN THE LAUNDRY AREA**

### High indoor relative humidity

#### Clothes dryer

- Empty the lint tray every time you use the dryer
- Check that your clothes dryer vents to the outside. If not, connect your clothes dryer vent to the outside. Seal the joints in the dryer duct with foil tape
- Occasionally inspect the vent and remove any built-up lint. Make sure nothing is placed in front of the vent outside and that the vent is kept clear.

#### Laundry tub and washing machine

- Dry your laundry tub and washing machine after you use them by wiping with a clean rag and hanging it to dry
- Leave the washing machine door open when not in use so that any water left behind can dry. This will prevent mould and bacteria from growing inside the washing machine

- Make sure that water from the washing machine flows directly into the laundry sink without dripping or splashing outside of the laundry sink. Use pipe extensions to reduce any splashing.
- Use cold water for laundry whenever possible since this reduces the amount of moisture created. Cold water also kills dust mites
- Check hoses and connections for leaks

#### Wet laundry

- Don't hang laundry indoors to dry

## **IN COLD ROOMS AND ROOT CELLARS**

#### Musty smell

- Stop using your cold cellar
- Change your cold cellar to a heated area or close it off from the house and add an entrance from the outside
- Use a refrigerator for cold storage or build a "root" cellar outside

## **HEATING SYSTEM**

#### Cold, unheated or damp areas

- Check that heating vents serving the area are open. Ensure dampers in the floor grille and/or ducts are open
- Ensure baseboard heaters are operation
- Ensure thermostats are working and are set properly
- Do not leave areas of the home unheated
- If your windows have a condensation problem, don't turn the heat down too low at night or when you are away
- Keep inside doors open for better airflow
- Make sure that there is no furniture around air intake grilles and heating vents
- Check thermostat settings
- Have the heating system checked (serviced) annually

#### Musty smell

#### Filters

- If you have any heat recovery ventilator (HRV), clean the filter inside the HRV as recommended by the manufacturer-usually the filters should be cleaned every three months and replaced as needed (for example when they stay dirty or black after cleaning)

#### Electric baseboards that collect dust and mould spores

- Vacuum baseboards often. Turn off units before vacuuming
- Inspect and maintain baseboards often

#### Furnace humidifiers

- Furnace-mounted humidifiers can be a source of mould
- Clean and dry trays often

#### Furnace

- Clean floor and wall grilles
- Vacuum ducts leading to the grilles

## **OUTSIDE THE HOUSE**

#### Leaks

- Regularly check the condition of the roof and exterior of the house for any places where water might enter
- Have suspected leakage points inspected and repaired

#### Water runoff

- Install downspout extensions to drain rainwater and melted snow away from the house
- Make sure that eavesdrops, downspouts and downspout extensions are connected and working
- Regularly remove any leaves from eavesdrops, downspouts and downspout extensions that block the water from flowing
- Water overflowing with eavesdrops may indicate something blocking the flow of water to the downspout
- Make sure soil, grass and driveway slope away from the house
- Fix problems as quickly as possible
- Check window wells and keep them clear of leaves or debris

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