

# Got Mold?

Gone for extended periods?

Mold growth resulting from water damage: three weeks



One week



Oh, what a vacation ending!

**Why Do We Get Mold?** Mold growth requires a combination of four key elements: temperature, nutrients, the presence of mold spores, and water. Normal living conditions easily provide three of these, as our residences contain ample food sources (materials made of cellulose), reasonable temperatures (40-100°F), and spores brought in via air currents (summer, spring, fall), or on clothing, footwear, or pets. Therefore the only element usually lacking is a source of moisture, which once present, starts the mold growth cycle.



And this sump pump is guaranteed!



Oops! Looks like it's the rainy season again

**Sources of Moisture:** The two main sources of moisture are **water vapor** and **free or 'bulk' water**. Water vapor refers to how much moisture is in the air at any given temperature. This is called relative humidity (RH). The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines suggest maintaining humidity levels equal to or less than 60%, and preferably 30-50%, whenever possible, or mold growth may occur. Free or 'bulk' water refers to spills, leaks, ruptured water lines, ice backup, floods, sump pump failure,

etc. In these cases water can soak into floor and wall materials potentially causing mold growth not only on the damp substrate surfaces, but also within wall and ceiling cavities. Obviously, the entrance of water into a structure from spills and leaks can also spike RH levels, creating a complexity of conditions all of which can be favorable for mold growth.

I have not looked into my attic in years!



**Structural Issues:** If left uncorrected, mold can cause structural damage. However, if the moisture issue (s) is corrected prior to structural damage, then the mere presence of surface mold on framing and decking materials in attics does not compromise them.

**Health Concerns:** Mold becomes a potential health concern depending upon exposure to it. Typically, walk in attics allow air exchange between the interior of the residence and attic air each time they are entered. They also can be drafty around trim, door jams, etc., thereby increasing exposure to mold spores. On the other hand, a properly installed hatch entrance, which is not used for any regular purpose, allows very little exchange between attic air and interior air, thereby minimizing exposure to mold spores.

**Testing:** the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) states that all mold is potentially allergenic and that some molds produce toxins. Bluepoint Environmental offers state of the art indoor air quality (IAQ) testing in all significant parameters: non-viable spore trap, viable N6, VOC and MVOC. We have inspected residences, commercial buildings, apartment complexes, healthcare facilities, hospitals, manufacturing plants, universities, schools, motels/resorts, restaurants, museums, yachts, power plants, etc. throughout the northeastern United States. Our expertise is only a phone call away!

For information on mold testing, consulting, or other IAQ issues, talk to Matt or Richard:



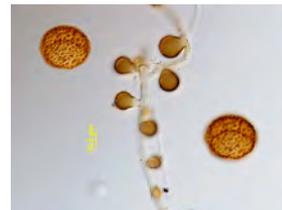
[www.bpe-llc.com](http://www.bpe-llc.com)  
706 N. Salina St., suite 204  
Syracuse, NY 13208  
315. 299. 2467  
AIHA EMLAP # 170784



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