



MOULD

HEALTH AND SAFETY PREVENTION

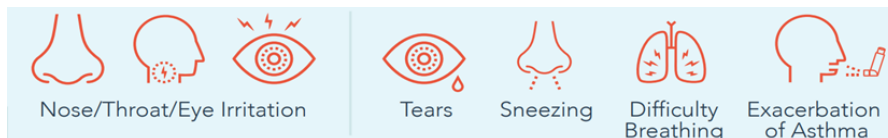
We all have a part to play for health and safety under the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#) (OHSA), also referred to as the [Internal Responsibility System](#) (IRS).

MOULD

[Moulds](#) are microorganisms that produce red, blue, brown, green, white, or black growths. Mould can grow anywhere and buildings with a history of water leaks, floods, fires, indoor air quality issues (e.g. poor humidity, lack of fresh air) are considered at greater risk. Some mould produces mycotoxins that can trigger allergies and respiratory issues. When disturbed, moulds release spores into the air which can cause exposure if inhaled.

COMMON SYMPTOMS RELATED TO MOULD

- Irritation to skin, eyes, nose, throat
- Watery eyes, runny nose, burning in the nose, nosebleeds
- Cough, congestion, difficulty breathing, asthmatic attacks
- Headache, difficulty concentrating, fatigue
- Impairment of the immune system



Mould can worsen allergy symptoms and cause health issues for those who are immunosuppressed or recovering from surgery. Workers who are allergic to mould could experience asthmatic attacks when exposed to mould. Symptoms usually disappear after mould exposure stops. This is why it is important to report and be aware of hazards in your work area. See the [GBC Virtual Health and Safety Board](#)

WHAT TO LOOK FOR - WHAT SHOULD YOU REPORT

- any flooding or spills
- damaged piping, plumbing and/or water leaks
- water damage, discolouration and staining (dark spots, stains or patches on any surface including ceiling, walls, floors, cardboard, window sills, carpet, furniture and duct work
- wet, woolly or slimy discoloured surfaces that may vary in colour (red, blue, brown, green, white, or black)
- musty smells (may indicate mould is present)
- standing water near sinks, tubs, dehumidifiers drip pans, air conditioners, and refrigerators
- [excessive humidity](#)

PREVENTION OF MOULD

- Keep relative humidity between 30 and 50 per cent
- Use devices to measure moisture level in wood, carpets, drywall, which indicate potential for mould growth
- Make sure landscaping and downspouts direct water away from building
- Use exhaust fans and ensure high moisture areas are properly ventilated
- Insulate cold surfaces to prevent condensation on pipes, windows, walls, roofs and floors
- Keep building and heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems in good repair
- Proper maintenance staffing to repair and maintain plumbing and fix leaks to prevent mould growth
- Vent showers and other moisture generating sources directly to the outside
- Control humidity with air conditioners and/or dehumidifiers
- Immediately clean up any floods or spills (within 24-48 hours)
- Reduce amount of water used when cleaning carpets and ensure adequate ventilation
- Avoid installing carpet around water sources or on top of concrete floors that are prone to condensation

REMEDIATION OF MOULD

[Mould remediation](#) should be carried out by trained professionals using PPE. Remediation protocol depends on type of material mould is found on and the size of contaminated area. Special control measures should be implemented before removal of toxic mould to prevent worker exposure and the spread to adjacent areas.

HOW TO REPORT MOULD ISSUES AND CONCERNS

1. Report mould issues and concerns to your **Supervisor** (who should contact Health, Safety and Wellness and Facilities to investigate and may fill out a [SAIR form](#))
2. If issue is not immediately dealt with then report to your [JHSC Worker Representative](#)

EMPLOYER DUTIES

Employers and supervisors have an obligation to **take every reasonable precaution** in the circumstances to protect workers and a duty to instruct workers in the safe removal and handling of mould contaminated material. Building owners must ensure trade contractors follow proper remediation procedures. See more duties [here](#).

Contact your [Joint Health and Safety Committee Worker Representative for advice](#)

WORKER DUTIES

- Follow legislation, workplace health and safety policies and procedures
- Wear and use the protective equipment required
- Work and act in a way that will not hurt yourself or anyone else
- Report concerns, hazards, incidents, injuries, or illnesses to your **Supervisor** and exposures, injuries, and illnesses *that require time off work, accommodations, or health care* to [WSIB](#)
 - In case of injury or illness [poster](#)

YOUR RIGHTS

RIGHT TO KNOW - workers have a right to information and instruction about hazards they are exposed to and protocols in place to control exposure.

View the [Virtual Health and Safety Board](#), ask your Supervisor or [JHSC](#) for more information or clarification

RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE - Workers participate through the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) which is provided with additional information, the power to identify hazards and make formal recommendations.

Make suggestions to your Supervisor or through your campus [JHSC](#)

RIGHT TO REFUSE - Workers have the [right to refuse unsafe work](#) if they have a reason to believe their work is likely to endanger their health and safety.

Inform your Supervisor and if you need further guidance contact your [JHSC Worker Representative](#)

PROTECTION AGAINST REPRISAL - You have protection against reprisals under [OHSA](#)

APPLICABLE LEGISLATION & STANDARDS

- [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)
- Although there are no Ontario regulations specifically addressing moulds, work practices set out by [Health Canada in Fungal Contamination of Public Buildings: A Guide to Recognition and Management](#) provide a reasonable standard

RESOURCES

- [Ontario Workplace Health and Safety](#)
- [Worker Health and Safety Awareness Four Steps](#)
- [Video Mould Exposure \(1.47 min\) - Work Safe BC](#)
- [Work Environment - Occupational Clinics for Ontario Workers \(OHCOW\)](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety \(CCOHS\) - Indoor Air Quality](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety \(CCOHS\) - Indoor Air Quality - Mould and Fungi](#)
- [Workplace Exposure and Illness - Government of Ontario](#)
- [Alert: Mould in workplace buildings - Government of Ontario](#)
- [Mould Resources - Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers \(OHCOW\)](#)



SAFETY STARTS WITH YOU