

Mold Inspection Standards of Practice

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A mold inspection is a non-invasive visual examination of a building to identify and report on conditions that have led to moisture intrusion, water damage and conditions conducive to microbial growth or the actual existence of microbial growth.

If such conditions are present samplings may be taken by the inspector to send to a laboratory for analysis. Limited sampling may also be recommended in the absence of visible conducive conditions as a precautionary measure; such as a carpet sample, as such conditions might be concealed.

A mold inspection is limited to the visible systems and components, as described in Section 4, of the building and will report conditions as noted above and will report any system or component not inspected and why – further limited to the inspection of a representative sampling of such systems and components.

1.0 Scope

1.1 The purpose of this standard is to provide standardized procedures to be used for a mold inspection. There are two types of mold inspections described in the IAC2 Mold Inspection Standards of Practice:

- (1) Complete Mold Inspection (Section 2.0)
- (2) Limited Mold Inspection (Section 3.0)

1.2 Unless the inspector and client agree to a limitation of the inspection, the inspection will be performed at the primary building and attached parking structure. Detached structures shall be inspected separately.

1.3 A mold inspection is valid for the date of the inspection and cannot predict future mold growth. Because conditions conducive to mold growth in a building can vary greatly over time, the results of a mold inspection (examination and sampling) can only be relied upon for the point in time at which the inspection was conducted.

1.4 A mold inspection is not a home (property) inspection.

1.5 A mold inspection is not a comprehensive indoor air quality inspection.

1.6 A mold inspection is not intended to eliminate the uncertainty or the risk of the presence of mold or the adverse effects mold may cause to a building or its occupants.

2.0 Complete Mold Inspection

2.1 The inspector shall perform:

- A non-invasive visual examination of the readily accessible, visible, and installed systems and components of the building (listed in Section 4.0 Standards of Practice)
- Moisture, temperature and humidity measurements (refer to Section 4.8 Moisture, Humidity, and Temperature)
- Mold samples according to the IAC2 Mold Sampling Procedures (refer to Section 5.0 IAC2 Mold Sampling Procedures)

2.2 The inspector shall report:

- Moisture intrusion,
- Water damage,
- Musty odors,
- Apparent mold growth, or
- Conditions conducive to mold growth;
- Results of a laboratory analysis of all mold samplings taken at the building; and
- Any system or component listed in Section 4.0 Standards of Practice that were not inspected and the reason(s) they were not inspected.

3.0 Limited Mold Inspection

The Limited Mold Inspection does not include a visual examination of the entire building, but is limited to a specific area of the building identified and described by the inspector. As a result, moisture intrusion, water damage, musty odors, apparent mold growth, or conditions conducive to mold growth in other areas of the building may not be inspected.

3.1 The inspector shall describe:

- The room or limited area of the building in which the Limited Mold Inspection is performed

3.2 The inspector shall perform:

- A limited non-invasive visual examination of the readily accessible, visible, and installed systems and components located only in the room or limited area (as described in previous Section 3.1).
- Mold samples according to the IAC2 Mold Sampling Procedures (see Section 5.0 IAC2 Mold Sampling Procedures)

3.3 The inspector shall report:

- Moisture intrusion,
- Water damage,
- Musty odors,
- Apparent mold growth, or
- Conditions conducive to mold growth; and
- Results of a laboratory analysis of all mold samplings taken at the building

4.0 Standards of Practice

4.1 Roof

I. The inspector shall inspect from ground level or eaves:

- A. The roof covering.
- B. The roof drainage system, including gutters and downspouts.
- C. The vents, flashings, skylights, chimneys, and any other roof penetrations.

II. The inspector is not required to:

- A. Walk on any roof surface.
- B. Predict the service life expectancy.
- C. Perform a water test.

4.2 Exterior and Grounds

I. The inspector shall inspect from the ground level:

- A. The cladding, flashing and trim.
- B. Exterior doors, windows, decks, stoops, steps, stairs, porches, railings, eaves, soffits and fascias.
- C. The exterior grading surrounding the building perimeter.
- D. Items that penetrate the exterior siding or covering materials.

II. The inspector is not required to:

- A. Inspect underground drainage systems.
- B. Window well drainage
- C. Inspect defects not related to mold growth or moisture intrusion.

4.3 Basement, Foundation, Crawlspace, and Structure

I. The inspector shall inspect:

- A. The foundation, basement, or crawlspace including ventilation.
- B. For moisture intrusion

II. The inspector is not required to:

- A. Operate sump pumps with inaccessible floats.
- B. Inspect for structural defects not related to mold growth or moisture intrusion.

4.4 Heating, Cooling and Ventilation

I. The inspector shall inspect:

- A. The air handler, circulating fan, and air filter.
- B. The condensate pump.
- C. Readily visible ductwork.
- D. Representative number of supply and return air registers.
- E. The central humidifier.
- F. The central air conditioning unit.

II. The inspector is not required to:

- A. Inspect the air conditioning coil if not readily accessible.
- B. Inspect the condensate pan if not readily accessible.
- C. Test the performance or efficiency of the HVAC system.
- D. Inspect the interior of ductwork system.

4.5 Plumbing

I. The inspector shall inspect:

- A. The readily visible main water line.
- B. The readily visible water supply lines.
- C. The readily visible drain, waste, and vent pipes.
- D. Hot water source.
- E. Fixtures such as toilets, faucets, showers and tubs.

II. The inspector is not required to:

- A. Test the showers and tubs by filling them with water
- B. Test whirlpool tubs, saunas, steam rooms, or hot tubs.
- C. Inspect for plumbing defects that are not related to mold growth or moisture intrusion.

4.6 Attic, Ventilation & Insulation

I. The inspector shall inspect:

- A. Insulation.
- B. Ventilation of attic spaces.
- C. Framing and sheathing.

II. The inspector is not required to:

- A. To move, touch, or disturb insulation.
- B. Inspect for vapor retarders.
- C. Break or otherwise damage the surface finish or weather seal on or around access panels and covers.

4.7 Interior

I. The inspector shall inspect:

- A. The walls, ceilings, floors, doors and windows.
- B. The ventilation in the kitchen, bathrooms and laundry.
- C. Whole-house ventilation fans

II. The inspector is not required to:

- A. Inspect for interior defects that are not related to mold growth or moisture intrusion.
- B. Inspect or move any furniture, storage items or household appliances.

4.8 Moisture, Humidity, and Temperature

I. The inspector shall measure:

- A. Moisture of any room or area of the building that has moisture intrusion, water damage, moldy odors, apparent mold growth, or conditions conducive to mold growth.
- B. Humidity of any room or area of the building (at the inspector's discretion).
- C. Temperature of any room or area of the building (at the inspector's discretion).

5.0 IAC2 Mold Sampling Procedures (Please visit www.iac2.org/sop for Section 5)

6.0 Limitations & Exclusions

6.1 Limitations:

- I. These Standards of Practice apply only to residential buildings with four or fewer dwelling units.
- II. The mold inspection is not a warranty, guarantee, or insurance policy.
- III. The mold inspection is not technically exhaustive.
- IV. The mold inspection will not identify concealed or latent conditions or defects.
- V. The mold inspection will not identify mold growth not readily visible at the time of the inspection.
- VI. The scope of a mold inspection does not include future conditions or events
- VII. The scope of a mold inspection does not include hidden mold growth or future mold growth.

6.2 Exclusions:

- I. The inspector is **not** required to report:
 - A. The condition of any system or component that is not readily accessible
 - B. The condition of any system or component that is not in the IAC2 Standards of Practice.
 - C. The service life expectancy of any system or component.
 - D. The size, capacity, BTU, performance, or efficiency of any component or system.
 - E. Compliance with codes, regulations or installation guidelines.
 - F. The presence of evidence of rodents, animals, insects, wood destroying insects and pests.

II. The inspector is **not** required to:

- A. Determine the presence of hidden mold by physical examination or sampling.
- B. Report replacement or repair cost estimates.
- C. Lift carpeting or padding.
- D. Inspect any other environmental issue.
- E. Determine the cause or reason of any condition.
- F. Perform a geotechnical, structural, geological evaluation.
- G. Move any personal items or other inspection obstructions, such as, but not limited to: insulation, throw rugs, furniture, floor or wall coverings, ceiling tiles, window coverings, equipment, plants, ice, debris, snow, water, dirt, foliage, or appliances.
- H. Dismantle, open, or uncover any system or component.
- I. Enter or access any area, crawlspace, or attic space, which, in the opinion of the inspector, may be unsafe or may risk personal safety.
- J. Do anything that may be unsafe or dangerous to the inspector or others or damage property according to the opinion of the inspector.
- K. Determine the insurability of a property.

II. The inspector is **not** required to operate:

- A. Any system that is shut down.
- B. Any system that does not function properly.
- C. Any system that does not turn on with the use of normal operating controls.
- D. Any shut off water or fuel valves or manual stop valves.
- E. Any electrical disconnect or over current protection devices.
- F. Any irrigation or sprinkler systems.

7.0 Definitions

- 7.1 Accessible: Can be approached or entered by the inspector safely, without difficulty, fear or danger.
- 7.2 Apparent Mold: visible growth with characteristics of mold, which cannot be confirmed by the inspector without the benefit of sampling. The term "mold growth" is interchanged in this course with "fungal growth" and "microbial growth."
- 7.3 Area of Concern: A room or area with moisture intrusion, water damage, musty odors, visible apparent mold growth, and conditions conducive to mold growth.
- 7.4 Complete: Comprehensive in scope or purpose.
- 7.5 Component(s): A permanently installed or attached fixture, element or part of a system.
- 7.6 Condition(s): The visible and conspicuous state of being of an object.
- 7.7 Dismantle: To open, take apart or remove any component, device or piece that would not typically be opened, taken apart or removed by an ordinary occupant.
- 7.8 Due Diligence: The degree of care and caution required by the circumstances of a person.
- 7.9 Dwelling Unit: A complete place to live including a kitchen and bathroom.
- 7.10 Household Appliances: Kitchen and laundry appliances, room air conditioners, and similar appliances.
- 7.11 Invasive: To probe, dismantle or take apart a system or component.
- 7.12 Interior: The area(s) of a building where people have access and are included in the condition space of the building.
- 7.13 Limited: Not comprehensive in scope or purpose.
- 7.14 Microbial: Microscopic organism such as mold.
- 7.15 Normal Operating Controls: Devices such as thermostats that would be operated by ordinary occupants, which require no specialized skill or knowledge.
- 7.16 Occupants: Tenants, persons, or entities each of which uses a portion of the building.
- 7.17 Readily Accessible: An item or component is readily accessible if, in the judgment of the inspector, it is capable of being safely observed without movement of obstacles, detachment or disengagement of connecting or securing devices, or other unsafe or difficult procedures to gain access.
- 7.18 Report: A written communication (possibly including digital images) of conditions seen during the inspection.
- 7.19 Representative Number: At least one in a particular room or area.
- 7.20 Sampling: The collection of air, surface, or carpet samples for analysis.

7.21 Shut Down: Turned off, unplugged, inactive, not in service, not operational, etc.

7.22 Inspect(ed): To visually look at readily accessible systems and components safely, using normal operating controls and accessing readily accessible panels and areas in accordance with these Standards of Practice.

7.23 Inspector: One who performs an inspection.

7.24 System(s): An assembly of various components to function as a whole.

7.25 Technically Exhaustive: A comprehensive and detailed examination beyond the scope of a mold inspection which would involve or include, but would not be limited to: dismantling, specialized knowledge or training, special equipment, measurements, calculations, testing, research, analysis or other means.

7.26 Unsafe: A condition in a readily accessible, installed system or component, which is judged to be a significant risk of personal injury during normal, day-to-day use. The risk may be due to damage, deterioration, improper installation or a change in accepted residential construction standards.