

Steps for Mould Remediation in Private Homes

Mould growth is common in water-damaged homes and buildings. Because exposure to indoor mould growth can result in various health hazards (including difficulty breathing, skin rashes and nose, eye and throat irritation), it's important to remove mould-damaged materials and repair mould damaged-areas quickly and safely.

Whether you choose to hire a contractor to address the mould concerns in your home, or complete this work yourself, it is important these key mould remediation steps are understood and followed:

Important Steps for Mould Remediation

Before starting any remediation or construction work on walls, be sure you know which walls are load-bearing, and consult a contractor for guidance on structural safety.

1. Conduct a visual inspection of the damage.

- Wear gloves and an N-95 respirator (available at most hardware stores). Assess the mould growth to determine the extent and materials that are affected.
- Be sure to check items like carpet, drywall and structural wood.
- Remember the extent of mould growth will affect remediation requirements, as is described in greater detail in Preventing and Removing Mould Growth After a Flood resource. A contractor is recommended if more than 10 square feet of mould growth is noted.

2. Remove mouldy materials in sealed plastic bags, whenever possible

- Check with your municipality about the collection of flood-damaged and mouldy items.
- Wear personal protective equipment including gloves, boots and an N-95 respirator mask, and remove and dispose of wet floor coverings, furniture and other soft materials.
- Remove and dispose of drywall that have been soaked or that have absorbed water.
- More information about safe clean-up can be found in the [Returning Home Safely after Flooding booklet](#); detailed guidance about items to discard is provided in the [Cleaning the House After a Flood](#) document. NOTE – both of these documents, and more, can be found by visiting www.albertahealthservices.ca/flood.

3. Clean, sanitize, and assess items for possible salvage and repair.

- Clean all household surfaces using warm water and soap.
- Then, sanitize all surfaces using a mild bleach solution (one tablespoon of bleach to four litres of water).

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- Assess items that might be safe for salvage & repair, including
 - a. Surfaces that DO NOT absorb water.
 - b. Fabrics that can be laundered and bleached.
 - c. Surfaces not affected by flood water.
 - Additional information about safe clean-up can be found in the [Returning Home Safely after Flooding booklet](#); detailed guidance about items to discard or salvage is provided in the [Cleaning the House After a Flood](#) document. NOTE – both of these documents, and more, can be found by visiting; www.albertahealthservices.ca/flood
4. Hire a professional to inspect and clean the furnace and ducting, hot water tank exhaust, and fireplace before use.
- Flood and sewage waters contain harmful microorganisms that can grow on surfaces inside your heating and ventilation ((HVAC) systems, even in ducting that was not submerged in water.
 - The professional hired should:
 - isolate sections of HVAC systems that are being cleaned using plastic sheeting or other vapour barriers.
 - Replace all flood damaged materials, like insulation and filters.
 - Vacuum, clean and sanitize all surfaces. All components must be dried as quickly as possible.
 - Test that the HVAC system is operating properly.
5. After completing steps one through four, continue with your renovations.
- Remember that any new construction should not be closed until after all structural components are dry.

More information about mould remediation, flood recovery and supports for you during this difficult time, are available at www.albertahealthservices.ca/flood

Contact us at 1-833-476-4743 or [submit a request online](#) at ahs.ca/eph.

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