

Prevent growth of mold/mildew in colder weather

Mold and mildew are not only unsightly, but unhealthy. These fungi grow readily in damp areas and are found in the air breathed both indoors and outside. If left unaddressed, mold and mildew can threaten the health of a home's inhabitants.

Mildew is a type of mold that remains relatively flush with the surface it grows on. Other molds can grow puffy in appearance. Molds serve the purpose of destroying organic materials, but in high amounts, these microorganisms can cause respiratory problems, sinus congestion, throat irritation, headaches, and other issues, particularly when mold grows unchecked indoors, says Better Homes and Gardens. As a result, it is es-

sential to address mold before it becomes problematic.

According to Polygon, a drying technology and temporary climate solutions company, the wet season in winter is when molds often grow and expand. Homeowners can employ the following strategies to prevent mold growth.

- Keep all surfaces clean, using proper cleaning products. Diluted bleach solutions are highly effective at killing microscopic fungi, viruses and bacteria.
- Reduce moisture and humidity by ensuring sufficient air circulation in rooms, particularly bathrooms and kitchens. An exhaust fan will help remove moisture quickly.
- Fabrics covered in mildew that can be laundered

should be carefully removed and washed in chlorine bleach and hot water. An oxygen bleach product also can be effective.

- Invest in a dehumidifier that can reduce moisture in the home in problem areas, such as damp basements or garages.
- Fix plumbing leaks as soon as possible.
- Remove damp leaves and snow from areas around the foundation of the home. Ensure that gutters and downspouts are clear of debris and can shuttle water away from the house effectively.
- Replace cracked or defective mortar in basements.
- Make sure all seals on windows and doors are not compromised and are in good working condition.



If left unaddressed, moisture can cause mold and mildew that, left unchecked, can threaten the health of a home's inhabitants.

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