



COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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Equal Opportunity Employer

Cautions when working around mold

Use personal protective equipment –

- Waterproof gloves –
- Goggles or protective glasses –
- N-95 respirator (available at hardware stores) to keep you from breathing in mold. An N-95 respirator has two straps and has a NIOSH approval number printed on it. Make sure the respirator fits tightly around your face. **Note-an N-95 respirator will not protect you if you have a beard because it will not seal properly.** Do not wear a “dust mask”. It will not protect you from mold.
- Wear clothing that covers as much of your body as possible (including covering hair and shoes) and that can be washed in hot water or thrown out.
- Work for short time periods and rest where you can breathe fresh air.
- Air out your home well during and after the work.
- Respirators that protect you from mold spores will not protect you from chemical fumes from disinfectants. Make sure the work area has good air flow.
- Never use a gasoline engine indoors (like a gas-powered water pump, pressure washer, or generator). You could expose yourself and your family to toxic carbon monoxide.

Do I Need to Disinfect?

- Bleach or products that contain bleach is not recommended, to disinfect for mold. They are too hazardous, and not any more effective than safer methods. Using bleach can harm your health. Bleach can irritate the skin, eyes, nose, and throat, and cause breathing problems (like asthma) and injuries. Bleach can also damage clothing, shoes, and other materials. Bleach will not kill mold unless you have cleaned the area first and removed the mold, and then bleach is not necessary. Bleach does not keep mold from growing back.

Buildings and Safety Division
Robert Lindsey, Deputy

Economic and Castle Airport
Development Division
Mark Mimms, Deputy

Environmental Health Division
Larry Fay, Interim Deputy

Planning Division
Deputy Director

- You cannot completely disinfect porous materials that are moldy, such as carpets, fabric, or drywall (gypsum board). You must remove them. (However, you can reuse washable items like clothing if all mold and staining can be removed.)
- For smooth nonporous surfaces, scrubbing with detergents and other recommended cleaners will remove mold, without the need to disinfect.
- If you are thinking of using bleach despite these warnings:
 - Only use bleach or disinfectants on nonporous materials and only AFTER cleaning with soap or detergent.
 - Never mix bleach with ammonia or anything other than water (unless product label allows for mixing) because this may produce toxic fumes.
 - It is very difficult to completely protect yourself from fumes and skin contact. Handle bleach with caution. Wear eye protection and gloves made to protect your skin from harsh chemicals. Make sure there is very good air circulation or outdoor air ventilation to reduce the fumes.

For more information on mold in the home go to:

[Mold \(ca.gov\)](#)