

Catholic Mutual... "CARES"

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREVENTING AND REDUCING MOLD GROWTH

The key to preventing and reducing mold growth is eliminating or controlling sources of water and moisture. The following checklist can assist you in keeping facilities well maintained and at the same time, limiting the potential for mold and mold growth.

Exterior Checks

- Are roof coverings and flashings in good condition to prevent water penetration? Are roof drains, gutters and downspouts clear and in good condition to prevent backups and leaks? Please refer to Catholic Mutual's "CARES" handout *Steps to Reduce Roof Leaks*.
- Are downspouts utilized to adequately divert water away from foundations?
- In addition, ground build up allowing a slope away from foundations may also be required to prevent water seepage into basement areas. If problems persist, drain tiles and sump pumps can be installed.
- Are exterior walls of building maintained to provide an adequate moisture barrier? Whether frame, masonry or metal, check for cracks, gaps or openings where moisture can enter. If needed, caulking, tuck-pointing or material replacement should be made.
- Do windows provide a good seal? Is window trim caulked and well maintained?

Reduce Indoor Humidity

- Vent showers and other moisture-generating sources to the outside.
- Control humidity levels and dampness by using air conditioners and dehumidifiers.
- Provide adequate ventilation to maintain indoor humidity levels between 30%-60%.
- Use exhaust fans whenever cooking, dishwashing, and cleaning in food service areas.

Inspect Interior Facilities for Signs of Mold, Moisture, Leaks or Spills

- Check for moldy odors.
- If possible, check attic areas, pipe chases and crawl spaces for mold growth.
- Look for water stains or discoloration on the ceiling, walls, floors and window sills.
- Look around and under sinks for standing water, water stains, or mold.
- Inspect bathrooms for standing water, water stains, or mold.
- Do not let water stand in air conditioning or refrigerator drip pans.

Respond Promptly when you see Signs of Moisture and/or Mold, or when Leaks or Spills Occur

- Clean and dry any damp or wet building materials and furnishings within 24-48 hours of occurrence to prevent mold growth.
- Fix the source of the water problem or leak to prevent mold growth.
- Clean mold off hard surfaces with water and detergent and dry completely.
- Absorbent materials such as ceiling tiles that are moldy should be replaced.
- Check mechanical and utility rooms for leaks or spills.

Prevent Moisture Condensation

- Reduce the potential for condensation on cold surfaces (i.e., windows, piping, exterior walls, roof or floors) by adding insulation.

Floor and Carpet Cleaning

- Remove spots and stains immediately, using the flooring manufacturer's recommended techniques.
- Use care to prevent excess moisture or cleaning residue accumulation and ensure that cleaned areas are dried quickly.
- In areas where there is a continual exposure for moisture and water, do not install carpeting. Examples include by drinking fountains, by classroom sinks, or on concrete floors subjected to leaks or frequent condensation.