

As a former Californian living in Colorado, I was surprised to hear someone complaining of a toxic mold problem. Here? In dry Colorado? Though we usually think of this as a coastal phenomenon, you may be surprised to know you have company in dealing with it.

Mold spores can be found anywhere

They float through the air, enter homes through doors and windows, and even hitch a ride on your pets. In most cases, these molds are harmless and can even be beneficial to the environment. It is when your home or piece of real estate begins to grow toxic mold that the real problem begins.

Mold and Water Damage

Problems with toxic mold rarely occur in homes unless there has been flooding, whether from rising water, leaking roofs, or plumbing problems. This is just as true here in Colorado as it is close to the coast. When mold spores anchor to moist, damp surfaces they find a perfect environment to replicate and spread. If the water damaged areas are not fully dried within 24 hours, there is a potential for mold damage to occur.

Health Risks

A home containing mold can be very detrimental to the health of everyone that lives in the home. Some individuals are more sensitive than others and can exhibit symptoms of allergic reaction very quickly after exposure to mold in the home. The most common health problems associated with mold exposure include difficulty breathing, eye irritations, and skin irritations. Some individuals may experience a severe reaction that could be life-threatening if not treated promptly.

Where Does Mold Grow?

Toxic mold tends to grow in places that are dark, damp, and poorly ventilated. To get rid of a mold problem, the source of the moisture must be eliminated. This is difficult in many situations and usually requires the assistance of a professional inspector. Any absorbent materials that begin to grow mold must be disposed of quickly to prevent the mold from spreading further.

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Cost of Mold Removal

If the area growing the mold is more than 2 feet in diameter, the services of a professional mold remover should be obtained to ensure that the mold is removed from the home safely and completely. This can cost anywhere from \$10,000 to \$50,000 for a medium sized home.

Mold and Real Estate Transactions

Toxic mold can cause a real estate transaction to fall through or cause the homeowner to become enmeshed in litigation. Any mold problems should either be corrected before attempting the sale of the home or disclosed prior to the completion of the sale. There have been a number of lawsuits in recent years regarding the development of illnesses after exposure to toxic mold. Judgments in these cases have resulted in more stringent standards and the creation of an entire industry dedicated to inspecting homes for mold growth.

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