

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.

**Rick Scott**

Governor

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State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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MOLD CAN COMPROMISE AIR QUALITY AND CAUSE HEALTH RISKS

PENSACOLA, FL – As residents clean and repair their storm-damaged homes and buildings, the Florida Department of Health in Escambia County (DOH-Escambia) urges everyone to take safety steps to avoid indoor air quality problems and minimize health hazards associated with mold. Moisture that enters buildings from leaks or flooding quickens mold growth. Molds can cause disease, trigger allergic reactions, and continue to damage materials long after a storm. Failure to control this moisture and mold can present short and long-term health risks.

TO PROTECT AGAINST HEALTH RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH MOLD:

- Remove standing water from your home or office.
- Remove wet materials.
- If mold growth has already appeared, carefully remove or clean the moldy material.
- Consider using personal protective equipment when cleaning or removing mold, i.e., gloves and goggles.
- Individuals with known mold allergies or asthma should not clean or remove moldy materials.
- Remember to not mix cleaners and disinfectants, as hazardous gases may produce toxic chemical reactions. Read and follow label instructions carefully. Open windows and doors to provide plenty of fresh air.

Molds are types of fungi and grown in the natural environment. Tiny particles of molds are found everywhere in indoor and outdoor air. In nature, molds help break down dead materials, and can be found growing on soil, foods, plants, and other items. Molds are also very common in buildings and homes. Mold needs moisture to grow. Indoors, mold growth can be found where humidity levels are high, like showers and attics. Molds produce microscopic cells called "spores" that are spread easily through the air. Spores can also be spread by water and insects. Live spores act like seeds forming new mold colonies when they find the right conditions.

For more information about indoor air quality and mold growth, contact the Florida Department of Health in Escambia County, or visit DOH's mold page <http://www.myfloridaeh.com/community/indoor-air/mold.htm>

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