

Preventing Mold after the Flood

First, we are so sorry for your loss and all are in our thoughts and prayers.

Information on Preventing Mold

Ideally, you should contract with a professional water extraction and mold remediation company that will work with a licensed mold consultant to ensure your build back is done correctly.

If you are performing the initial work yourself, here are some suggestions that we hope help as you recover from the flooding.

For Safety:

1. Turn off electrical breakers if you had water deep enough to reach any electrical outlets.
2. Use personal protection equipment, including rubber gloves, safety glasses when removing sheetrock and insulation, and N95 dust masks.
3. If you are using a generator for power, make sure it is running in a well-ventilated area outside the house.
4. When using chemicals during clean up, be sure to follow the manufacturer's directions.
5. Be mindful of slipping hazards on wet surfaces including flooring, ladders and stairs.

Initial Clean Up:

1. Remove all damaged and wet materials from your home. This includes both your belongings and any wet building materials, such as sheetrock, insulation, cabinetry, trim molding, carpet, pads, hard wood flooring, and interior doors.
2. Remove any remaining standing water from your home.
3. If you still have power, make sure your air conditioner is off to prevent cross-contamination of mold spore activity during the clean-up process.

Drying Out Your Home:

NOTE: Mold growth starts when building materials reach 17% and higher moisture content, and/or when the relative humidity reaches close to 70% humidity.

1. Once all damaged materials and standing water are removed, use fans and dehumidifiers to begin the drying process.
2. Remove all debris (sheetrock dust, insulation, and dirt or mud) from the exposed wood, especially the [base plates](#) that are in direct contact with the concrete foundation.
3. Spray the exposed wood with [Mold Control](#) NOW. You want the antimicrobial protection on the wet wood during the drying stage.

4. Keep the RH (Relative Humidity) in the 50's or even a little lower if possible. Don't let the RH get in the high 60's.
5. Once the Mold Control has been applied, turn on your A/C and set it at 75 degrees or lower. It will act as your dehumidifier and air scrubber from this point forward.
6. Replace the air return filter/s with [MERV 8](#) pleated filter/s. You will need to replace the filters weekly until you have completed the rebuild. After that, you should replace them once a month.

Build Back:

1. While the studs are still exposed, I suggest you go to www.biocidelabs.com and purchase a case (6) of their aerosol [Mold Bombs](#). Place them as recommended by the manufacturer throughout the house and put one at the air return duct. Remove the air return filter, place the A/C on "FAN ONLY" and activate all the bombs.
After activating the bombs, leave the house for two (2) hours. Upon returning, open the house and air it out. The mold bombs will have killed all airborne microbial spores, including any that got into the HVAC duct system.
2. Now comes the build back (only after the wood has dried to 17% or less). Insulation can only work if it can trap air, so insulation MUST be replaced in the cavity correctly to prevent compressed insulation, which happens when it is not cut to fit correctly (either too long or too wide).
Insulation must touch all six sides of the cavity with the back of the sheetrock being the last touched portion without being compressed. Insulation must be split around electrical wires (half in back and half in front). Insulation must be CUT around electrical boxes, not smashed or crushed around them.
3. Clean all hard surfaces with [Clorox Clean-Up](#) (cleaner + bleach) in the green bottle. This works well on hard surfaces, killing 99.9% of bacteria. Vacuum any soft surfaces that you were able to save with a vacuum that has a HEPA filter.
4. Once you have completed steps 1-3 of the build back process, find a licensed mold consultant who can take air samples to verify the acceptable indoor air quality of your home and give you a clearance letter to keep in your household file.