

# Attention Property Owners & Managers: Mold could cost you millions!

## How Will You Benefit from Mold and Moisture Control?

### *AVOID costly repairs*

- The cost of fixing a leaking pipe now is cheaper than fixing a foundation or wall damaged by a water leak later.

### *MAINTAIN your building's structural integrity and keep your property value up*

- Moisture and mold decay wood floors, walls and other porous building materials.
- Moisture ruins paint by causing it to bubble and peel.



### *PREVENT liability for tenants' health problems*

- Mold exposure can cause health effects ranging from minor irritation and allergies to serious side effects caused by mold toxins.
- Mold exposure increases asthma symptoms. Approximately 4.6 million asthma cases are estimated to be due to mold and moisture in the home (1).
- A childhood asthma needs assessment was completed in East Palo Alto in 2006. Stakeholders partly linked the city's high asthma hospitalization rates to poorly maintained rental units.

## Sample Court Settlements for Mold Problems



- **\$22.6 million** settlement to family whose child suffered from chronic respiratory problems, sinus infections, fatigue and brain damage from living in home constructed from moldy lumber - Gorman v. Komick, Crenshaw Lumbar CA, 2005 (2).
- **\$251,000** verdict against commercial landlord for negligence in maintaining premises and illnesses (asthma, memory loss & fatigue) arising from mold - Loring v. Wahlgren CA, 2004 (2).
- **\$149,000** was awarded to tenant when landlord failed to respond to complaints about mold in the unit and failed to have contents properly cleaned - Lynch v. Saroyan California, 2004 (2).

**REMEMBER, IT IS  
LESS EXPENSIVE TO:**

- Prevent mold problems than to fix them
- Prevent mold problems than to pay for health effects

# Quick Tips to Save \$\$\$

## Avoid building repairs and potential liability

### Prevent Mold and Mildew

#### *Maintain Airflow*

- Ensure that windows open and close and that fans work
- Check vents frequently for proper functioning
- Insulate walls to avoid condensation
- Replace single pane windows with double pane to reduce condensation

#### *Prevent Moisture Intrusion*

- Fix cracks in walls, window wells & doors
- Caulk around tubs, windows and vents
- Vent appliance steam outdoors
- Clean rain gutters and direct water away from structures by using downspouts
- Slope ground away from house foundation to facilitate proper drainage

#### *Address Water Damage Within 24 Hours*

- Discard books, papers, cardboard and other non-essential items that can't be dried
- Remove water from carpets and rugs with an extraction vacuum
- Remove dust and mold spores with a HEPA vacuum from area once it is dry

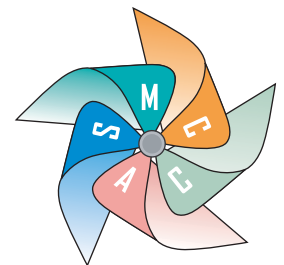


### Clean and Remove Mold

- Call a professional if you have areas of mold that are greater than 15 square feet
  - Never paint or caulk over moldy surfaces
  - Discard moldy porous items such as dry wall, carpet, etc.
  - Clean non-porous surfaces such as linoleum and counter tops with water and a mild detergent, then dry thoroughly.
- Note: Bleach is an asthma trigger** – Use it only if mold is extensive and there are no children or people with lung disease present, and you have good ventilation. **Never mix Bleach with Ammonia.**

### Resources

### Provided by



San Mateo County  
Asthma Coalition

and the  
East Palo Alto Asthma Task Force