

# What to Expect When You Hire a Mold Assessor and Mold Remediation Contractor

## When does a property owner have to hire a Mold Assessor or Mold Remediation Contractor?

The New York State Department of Labor does not require you to clean up mold on your property. However, if you decide to have someone assess and remediate an area of mold that is larger than 10 square feet of mold, you must use a licensed mold professional to do the work. You must first have a Mold Assessor do an inspection and complete a Mold Remediation Plan. You will then hire a Mold Remediation Contractor to do the work outlined in the plan.

When you hire a mold professional for a mold project, the mold professional must perform their duties in accordance with the New York State Mold Law, Article 32, “Licensing of Mold Inspection, Assessment and Remediation Specialists and Minimum Work Standards.” This fact sheet provides guidance so you know what to expect.

## What are the main responsibilities of a Mold Assessor?

- Have a valid Mold Assessor License from the New York State Department of Labor for the company and employees.
- Perform the **initial** visual inspection and assessment of the property for mold growth. This may include the use of a moisture meter and, in rare cases, mold sampling.
- Identify the underlying source of moisture causing the mold growth (when possible).
- Educate the property owner on the Mold Law and mold in general.
- Develop a Mold Remediation Plan. This plan will identify:
  - The source of the moisture causing mold growth,
  - How to remedy the moisture issue,

- The mold remediation methods to be used for cleanup, and
- The criteria that must be met to consider the cleanup complete.
- Perform a post-remediation assessment to confirm the remediation was successful.
- Develop a written passed clearance report or final status report.

## Why is mold sampling rarely recommended?

- Mold is a natural part of the environment. There is always some mold in the air and on surfaces.
- Sampling will almost always reveal the presence of mold or mold spores.
- There are no national or state standards for comparing or analyzing mold samples.
- There are no national or state standards to compare the sample results against.
- Unless people are allergic to mold or mold spores, the presence of mold does not usually produce any symptoms.
- Unless you know the specific type (genus and species) of mold to which someone is allergic, this information is not typically useful.

## What should the Mold Assessor put in the Mold Remediation Plan?

The *Mold Remediation Plan* is specific to each project. The purpose of this plan is to provide methods to eliminate the moisture source(s) and visible mold growth. The plan should include:

- A description of the rooms or areas where the remediation will be performed,
- An estimate of the quantity of material to be cleaned or removed,
- A description of the abatement methods to be used for each type of remediation in each area,
- A proposal for containment, when needed, to prevent the spread of mold,

- A list of recommended personal protective equipment for abatement workers (to be provided by the Remediation Contractor),
  - A list of clearance procedures and criteria for each type of remediation in each area,
  - For an occupied property, recommendations for notice to occupants and posting requirements that are appropriate for the project,
  - An estimate of cost and time for completion of the project,
  - Information on the use of any United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) registered disinfectant, biocide, or antimicrobial coating being considered, taking into account the potential for occupant sensitivities to such products, and
  - Identification of the underlying source(s) of moisture, when possible, that may be causing mold growth and recommendations for the type of contractor who would be able to fix the issue.
- Ensure workers on projects have Mold Abatement Worker licenses from the Department of Labor.
  - Prepare a *Mold Remediation Work Plan*. This plan gives instructions and standard operating procedures for how they will do the cleanup work described in the *Mold Remediation Plan*. This plan may also include containment construction and other equipment necessary to prevent the spread of mold spores during the abatement.
  - The Mold Remediation Work Plan must be given to you **before** cleanup work starts.
  - Perform the physical removal, cleaning, sanitizing, surface disinfection or other work that is needed to clean up the mold, in accordance with general industry-accepted standards.

**Note:** Mold remediation contractors are not required to remedy the source of the moisture that caused the mold if they do not have the required expertise to do so.

**Note:** It is always recommended to correct the underlying source of water/moisture before cleaning up mold growth or the mold will likely grow back.

#### How is the *Mold Remediation Plan* used?

The Mold Assessor must give you, the client, the *Mold Remediation Plan* before the cleanup project begins. You should understand and agree with the plan.

You will then give the *Mold Remediation Plan* to Mold Remediation Contractors you may want to hire to do the work. This will give them the information they need to give you a cost estimate for the work.

#### What are the main responsibilities of a Mold Remediation Contractor?

- Have a valid Mold Remediation Contractor License from the Department of Labor for the company.

#### What precautions must be taken when disinfectants, biocides and antimicrobial coatings are used during mold remediation?

Disinfectants, biocides and antimicrobial coatings registered with the USEPA may only be used if they are specified in the Mold Remediation Plan. These chemicals must be used only for their intended purpose. They should also only be applied according to the manufacturer's labeling instructions. The Mold Assessor and the Mold Remediation Contractor must consider the potential for people who occupy the property to be sensitive or have a negative reaction to the chemicals.

#### When is a mold remediation project complete?

Once your Mold Remediation Contractor has done the work, the Mold Assessor must do a post-remediation assessment. The project is complete when the Mold Assessor issues a written passed clearance report that states:

- the work area is free from all visible mold,
- all work has been done according to the *Mold Remediation Plan* and *Mold Remediation Work Plan*, and
- the clearance criteria listed in the *Mold Remediation Plan* was met.

If the cleanup work was not successful, the Mold Assessor will write a final status report listing what needs to be done to receive a passed clearance report. The final status report will be given to you and the Mold Remediation Contractor.

You should use the same Mold Assessor who wrote the *Mold Remediation Plan* to do the post-remediation assessment, but this is not required.

The Mold Remediation Contractor may not remove materials or dismantle containment structures until you get a passed clearance report.

**Note:** If you decide not to have a post-remediation assessment, the Mold Assessor and Mold Remediation Contractor should get documentation that you accept the work as is before they leave the property.

#### Where can I find more information on general industry accepted practices for mold remediation?

- New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/mold.page>
- New York State Department of Health: <https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/7287/>
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: <https://www.epa.gov/mold>
- Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification: <http://www.iicrc.org/standards/iicrc-s520/>

#### How can I verify that a Mold Assessor or Mold Remediation Contractor is licensed by the Department of Labor?

Visit the Department of Labor's website and use the "Licensed Mold Contractors Search Tool" at: <https://www.labor.ny.gov/workerprotection/safetyhealth/mold/licensed-mold-contractors-search-tool.shtm>

#### How can I file a complaint if I do not believe the mold professionals followed this guidance?

Submit the "Mold Contractor Complaint Form" at: <https://www.labor.ny.gov/workerprotection/safetyhealth/mold/compliance.shtm>