

## Before You Enter Any Moldy Site

- **Protect yourself and loved ones against hazards.** People with breathing problems like asthma or who have weakened immune systems should stay away from moldy sites. Children should not take part in disaster cleanup work. Check for loose power lines or gas leaks. Make sure the electricity and gas are turned off. Look for sagging ceilings or floors or other structural problems. Watch out for wet, muddy, or slippery floors.
- **Protect your mouth and nose** against breathing in mold: wear at least an N-95 respirator. If you plan to spend a lot of time removing moldy belongings or doing work like ripping out moldy drywall, wear a half-face or full-face respirator.
- **Protect your skin.** Wear protective gloves (non-latex, vinyl, nitrile, or rubber). Do not touch mold or moldy items with bare hands.
- **Protect your eyes.** Wear goggles that provide *complete* eye protection. Choose goggles designed to keep out dust and small particles. Safety glasses or goggles that have open vent holes will not protect you against dust and small particles.

## Personal Mold Clean Up

### Follow these steps:

1. Put on the personal protective equipment described above to protect your eyes, nose, mouth, and skin.
2. Remove standing water and wet materials. Use a wet vacuum to remove water from floors, carpets, and hard surfaces. Dry your home and everything in it as quickly as you can – within 24 to 48 hours if you can.
3. Open all doors and windows when you are working and leave as many open as is safe when you leave.
  - Open inside doors, especially closets and interior rooms, to let air flow to all areas. Take doors off their hinges if you need to.
  - Open kitchen cabinets and bathroom vanity doors; remove drawers, wipe them clean, and stack them to dry.
  - Open the attic access to let air flow to the attic. Before you open the attic door, make sure nothing will fall on you.

4. When electricity is safe to use, use fans and dehumidifiers to remove moisture. Do not use fans if mold has already started to grow, because the fans may spread the mold.
5. Clean with water and a detergent. Remove all mold you can see. Dry right away.
6. If you use cleaning products, do not mix cleaning products together. DO NOT mix bleach and ammonia because it can create toxic vapors.
7. Painting or caulking over mold will not prevent mold from growing. Fix the water problem completely and clean up all the mold before you paint or caulk.
8. Throw away items that can't be cleaned and dried. Throw away anything that was wet with flood water and can't be cleaned and dried completely within 24 to 48 hours.

If you have precious items that you want to preserve, follow these guidelines from:

**The Smithsonian Institute**

[www.si.edu/mci/english/learn\\_more/taking\\_care/mnm.html](http://www.si.edu/mci/english/learn_more/taking_care/mnm.html)

**Centers For Disease Control And Prevention**

Homeowner's and Renter's Guide to Mold Cleanup After Disasters

<https://www.cdc.gov/mold/cleanup-guide.html>