

Preventing Mold In Your Church

Loss Control, Water Damage Prevention, 6

There are many sources that can create moisture and cause mold in your house of worship: high humidity, leaks from plumbing or sprinklers, and even dampness or condensation. Microbial mold and fungi can grow on surfaces in less than 24 hours. Although most mold (with a few notable exceptions) is harmless, there are many people with allergies and respiratory issues who are extremely sensitive to mold. The steps you take to clean mold after a water event occurs will depend on the extent of the damage. After addressing the source of water or moisture issues, immediate action should be taken to minimize the growth of mold. The best way to prevent mold is to control moisture and dry any wet areas immediately. Learn what to do should mold occur in your house of worship.

- Insurance Board recommends contacting a professional water remediation company immediately if there is significant water damage.
- If the water is clean, remove as much of it as you can before the water remediation company arrives. Do not attempt to remove water contaminated by sewage. When in doubt, leave it to the professionals.
- If you choose to do the clean up, wear personal protective equipment: an N-95 respirator, goggles, and protective gloves.
- Remove and dispose of all wet ceiling tiles and drywall within 24 hours of water contact. Drywall up to 12 inches above the water line should be replaced.
- Dry all wet light fixtures.
- Water damaged furniture, including wood, should be replaced or cleaned with a 10% bleach solution. Test surface area first in an inconspicuous spot.
- Leave all cabinets and drawers open to facilitate air flow. Treat surfaces of cabinets and drawers with the bleach solution.
- Remove essential paper to a location where it can be dried, photocopied, and discarded.
- Immediately remove as much water as possible from carpeting using wet vacuums.
- After wet vacuuming, immediately shampoo the carpet with a 10% bleach solution. Spot test an inconspicuous area first.
- When using any form of biocide, including bleach, increase air circulation and ventilation by opening windows and doors.
- Use fans, dehumidifiers and air conditioning to speed the drying process.
- If odors or complaints of health effects exist after the clean up, consult an industrial hygienist or environmental microbiologist.

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