

# Maintenance Tip – Mold/Mildew

The Live Oak Housing Authority Maintenance Department.

**MOLD.** Mold (also called mildew) is found throughout the environment, both indoors and outdoors, and can be spread through the air or by surface contact. Molds are naturally occurring microscopic organisms (fungi) which reproduce by spores. All of us have lived with mold spores all our lives. Mold must have moisture to grow. It can grow wherever there is excessive, prolonged or continuous moisture from any source and even where moisture is intermittent. Because it is believed that exposure to some molds under certain conditions may cause health concerns for some individuals, it is important to prevent or control mold growth in your apartment.

**HOUSEKEEPING TO PREVENT MOLD.** By signing this Addendum, and in order to protect the Tenant and other Tenants, Tenant agrees that Tenant will:

1. keep Tenant's apartment clean and free from unreasonable moisture accumulation;
2. not block, cover or interfere with the normal operation of the heating, ventilation or air conditioning equipment or ducts in the apartment;
3. if Tenant has a clothes dryer in the apartment, keep the clothes dryer properly vented to the exterior venting pipe and keep the vent inside of the apartment free of debris;
4. keep carpets, rugs, and floors clean and dry by regular vacuuming and mopping;
5. use household cleaners to clean hard surfaces;
6. immediately throw away moldy food; and
7. remove visible moisture accumulation on windows, walls, ceilings, floors and other surfaces as soon as reasonably possible, or to immediately report same to management as provided below.

**REPORTING MOISTURE PROBLEMS OR MOLD.** Tenant also agrees to immediately report in writing to the management office:

1. any evidence of water leaks or infiltration or excessive or continuous moisture in the apartment, including any stains or moisture on walls or ceilings or under or around sinks, bathtubs, or other plumbing fixtures;
2. any evidence of mold or mildew-like growth or stain on hard (non-porous) surfaces that cannot be removed by use of any common household cleaner;
3. any failure or malfunction in the heating ventilation or air conditioning system in the apartment; and
4. any doors or windows which do not seal or operate properly.

In the event you do not believe that you are able to properly remove any mildew-like growth, you must report the presence of this growth to management as provided herein.

**MOISTURE SOURCES.** Leaks and moisture that might accumulate on dwelling surfaces or that might get inside walls or ceilings can encourage mold growth. Sources of moisture of which Tenant shall be aware include:

- rainwater leaking from roofs, windows, doors and outside walls, as well as flood waters rising above floor level;
- overflows from showers, bathtubs, toilets, lavatories, sinks, washing machines, dehumidifiers, refrigerator or A/C drop pans or clogged up A/C condensation lines;
- leaks from plumbing lines or fixtures, and leaks into walls from bad or missing grouting/caulking, grouting/caulking around showers, tubs or sinks;
- washing machine hose leaks, plant watering overflows, pet urine, cooking spills, beverage spills and steam from excessive open-pot cooking;
- leaks from or clogged clothes dryer discharge vents (which can put lots of moisture into the air; and
- wet carpets, carpet pads, shower walls and bathroom floors.

If you observe any of the foregoing, please notify the management office in writing immediately.

Small areas of mold on non-porous surfaces (such as ceramic tile, Formica, vinyl flooring, metal, wood or plastic, but not sheetrock walls, can be cleaned with soap (or detergent) and water, letting the surface dry, and then within 24 hours, applying a pre-mixed, spray-on-type household biocide, such as Lysol Disinfectant®, Pine Sol Disinfectant® (original pine scent), Tilex Mildew Remover®, or Clorox Cleanup®. Only a few of the common household cleaners will actually kill mold. Tilex® and Clorox® contain bleach which can discolor or stain. ***Be sure to follow the instructions on the container.***

If you have any questions whatsoever about proper cleaning procedures to prevent or remove mold, please contact the management office for further information. If you are unsure whether you or management are responsible for cleaning a surface or removing a visible growth, please call the management office.