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IICRC Mold Remediation: What Happens After a Flood?

Industry leader shares top tips for restoring a mold-damaged facility

LAS VEGAS– (October 1, 2015) – Have you ever wondered what happens when a mold removal specialist gets called to a mold-damaged facility? The Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC) shares five steps a mold removal specialist takes when conducting mold remediation.

"Many people aren't aware of the dangers, nor the difficulty level of removing mold from a facility," said IICRC Chairman Tony Wheelwright. "Mold remediation is a potentially hazardous process that should only be undertaken by a certified professional."

Five steps that each mold-removal specialist takes when conducting mold remediation includes:

1. Determine the degree of contamination. The first step for a mold remediation specialist may be to bring in an Indoor Environmental Professional (IEP) to determine the extent of the mold damage and test for contamination within the facility. Because mold spores and other microscopic contaminants can travel easily throughout a building, the IEP may collect and analyze samples from affected as well as unaffected areas of the building. Once the IEP has finished the inspection they will develop a remediation plan for the mold removal specialist with steps to return the home to its pre-loss condition (Condition 1).

2. Set up and verify containment. To make sure mold contamination does not spread to other areas of a facility, the mold remediation specialist will set up containment by creating isolation barriers. Once the barriers are set up, the specialist will need to verify the containment with a lower partial pressure differential (negative pressure) to ensure there is no air leakage between containment zones. Exit chambers would then be used to serve as a transition between the containment and the unaffected area of the building. Once the containment is verified and the correct amount of pressure is achieved, the removal process can begin.

3. Remove unsalvageable materials. Porous materials and items that cannot be restored or cleaned effectively must be carefully discarded. Unsalvageable items include but are not limited to drywall, insulation and other items with visible mold growth. It is important for the specialist to wear the appropriate personal protective equipment which may include a full face respirator equipped with a P100/OV cartridge, disposable coveralls and nitrile gloves.

4. **Clean surfaces with a high-attention to detail.** A mold remediation specialist will likely begin the cleaning process by thoroughly vacuuming the contaminated areas using a HEPA vacuum with a high-efficiency filter to catch mold spores. He or she will then begin a detailed cleaning process involving mold removal tools such as a HEPA filtered sander, followed by the damp wiping of surfaces with an effective cleaning solution.

5. Verify remediation. Once cleaning is complete, the IEP will return to too to verify the remediation was successful. The area must be returned to the dry standard and should be visually dust free with no malodors. In addition an IEP may perform surface or air sampling as part of the verification that the area is back to normal fungal ecology (Condition 1).

"Mold remediation requires mold removal specialists to perform techniques that promote source removal rather than relying on chemicals, paints and coatings as a replacement," said Rachel Adams, President of Indoor Environmental Management, Inc. "Understanding and managing air flow is also critical to the success of a mold remediation project. Working with qualified IEP can also help to reduce the liability for the technician as well as provide a final determination if the remediation was successful."

For more information on mold remediation or the latest in mold remediation standards, visit the IICRC website at http://www.iicrc.org.

About IICRC
The IICRC is a global, ANSI-accredited Standards Developing Organization (SDO) that credentials individuals in 20+ categories within the inspection, cleaning and restoration industries. Representing more than 54,000 certified technicians and 6,000 Certified Firms in 22 countries, the IICRC, in partnership with regional and international trade associations, represents the entire industry. The IICRC does not own schools, employ instructors, produce training materials or promote specific product brands, cleaning methods or systems. For more information, visit www.iicrc.org.

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