MOLD REMEDIATION: How Complex Should It Be?

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Remediation Objectives

1. Restore building conditions.
2. Re-establish conditions acceptable to most occupants population.
3. Protect sensitive individuals to the extent possible.
4. Eliminate “toxic” molds???
Historical Development

Early Approaches:

- routine maintenance issue
- general sanitizing procedure
- initial IAQ recommendations
- infection control
- systematic abatement
Hysterical Development

- Emergence of the “toxic mold” theory
- NYC *Stachybotrys* Guidelines
- Health Canada
- AIHA Field Guide
The Pendulum Swings Back

- Revised NYC Guidelines
- EPA
- CDC
Defining the Scope of Work

• “Do you want to be a mold millionaire?” (plaintiff’s version)

• “Do you want to be a mold millionaire?” (defendant’s version)

• Toxic mold assumptions vs. reality
Must All Mold Be Removed?

- **Removal vs. Treatment**

- **Example**: When repairs must be delayed

- **Example**: Where mold must be left in place
Worker Protection

- Basis of current recommendations
- Respiratory Protection Program = Catch 22
- Use of disposable respirators
Selecting Remediation Controls

Primary Objectives:
• Protect occupants from exposure during process
• Return building surfaces to pre-existing sanitary condition
• Prevent Containment Migration?
• To bleach or not to bleach?
Alternatives to Full Containment:

- Critical barriers
- Portable HEPA filters
- Vacate a large buffer zone
- Work when building vacant
- Enhanced cleaning of surrounding areas
Project Oversight

• Establish work practices

• Periodic inspection (visual indicators)

• No testing (except to verify pilot project)
Protecting Occupants

- More stringent controls needed for bona fide sensitive individuals.
- Less control acceptable where exposure will be negligible.
- When is building evacuation needed?
Verifying Remediation

- It’s Groundhog Day Again! (breaking the test/fail cycle)
- Why false negatives?
- Why false positives?
- Option A: clearing without tests
- Option B: testing pilot project only (realistic criteria)
How Complex Should It Be?

• Typical “toxic” mold scenario

• Reality-Base Remediation:
  – minor cleanup
  – moderate controls
  – most stringent approach
THAT’S ALL FOLKS !