What Defines a Water Damage Building

What is a water damage building? In a Water Damage Building, the humidity is higher than what it should be. You can live in places that are humid, such as Florida or Houston.

Hello, that's where we are. And the Humidity can be ideal. But if the humidity goes up, all you got to do is provide food for mold, bacteria, and then they grow.

Inside the interior of a water damage building may not only be just mold, but it can be bacteria that's from basically toilet water or comes in under the foundation, or actinomycetes.

If you're colonized with that, you take it with you. You breathe it in, it hits the back of your throat, and you swallow it. It can get into your bloodstream, into you lungs, in your skin.

So drywall and what covers dry wall, which is paper cellulose, that feeds mold. So the interior of a water damaged building means the humidity is too high and you may have all three of those things growing in your home.

People say mold is everywhere. That's true. But if you're in closed walls, the humidity is too high, and there's only five species of mold that make people sick.

Health Effects and Warning Signs

We'll put those in here. There's five types of molds that only make sick people. However, if the wrong types of mold grows, it can cause all kinds of things like narcolepsy.

You may be chronically fatigued or you may suffer from insomnia and think, what's wrong with me? But it may related to a water damage building. One of the first questions is, do you have musty smells?

Musty Smells aren't necessarily mold, but it might be bacteria. So that's number one. If you see anything, when you look at the air conditioning registers, you don't know if it's bacteria or mold.

You must test. Another is if you live in a water damaged building, there might be peeling of paint. There might buckling of baseboards and just the visible stuff around you.

So look at the ceiling tiles. Look at outside of the home too. You want to make sure that there's weep holes all the way around a building. and you also want to be sure that there aren't water stains.

Another thing that you need to remember is that the absolute humidity within a structure needs to lower. You don't need 60% humidity. 50 or less, or maybe even a lot less.

So this is where an indoor environmental professional can help you.

Humidity Control and HVAC Inspection

You want to put into your air conditioning system a whole-home dehumidifier, if at all possible. There are special ionization things that you can put in to the HVAC.

there might be growth in there, but there's a thing in your conditioning air system called the plenum. A plentum is like the hood of a car. If you look in it, there should be no microbial growth whatsoever.

Additionally, you can ask an air conditioning repairman to do what's called a pressure test. That's where they put pressure through the ventilation system, and there should not be a leak greater than 3%. If there's a lead greater

3%, then air that is not clean can get into your HVAC system beyond where the plenum is.

Additionally, you should have someone look at the coils. So you have the condenser on the outside of your house and then it comes in and there's coils, there should be no growth anywhere in there.

If you live within the interior of a water damaged building, even if you're in new construction, Sometimes they'll lay plywood out, throw it up into a wall cavity, then they will put drywall, float it, tape it and seal that, but that wood was water damaged and it's going to grow mold in that enclosed space and then it is going off gas to the rest of your home.

You can have the cleanest home and brand new construction and you might have water damage and not know it. So the only way to test is by doing an environmental test.

How do you know if the interior of your home has water damage? Well, we recommend doing one of several types of tests.

Hidden Water Damage in New Construction

I'll go through those. The company that we recommended is EnviroBiomics. They're based out of San Antonio, Texas. Inside this little kit, you can pick this up at our office or we can ship it to you.

If you're one of our patients, what I love is we get notification of what the results are. There will be a set of gloves and a Swiffer cloth that has been vacuum sealed into a bag.

You take the Swipper cloth out and the object of testing is to avoid rooms that have a relatively high humidity because that's going to be distorted from what's in the dust of your home.

So think of this. You go high and you want to collect lots of dust from at least 10 surfaces. wipe back and forth. You want to wipe one direction. So put your gloves on, stand up on a ladder.

If you have ceiling fans in large rooms, you wipe down one blade, wipe on the underside. you can do the other surface behind TVs, behind furniture and pictures.

Environmental Testing Methods

We don't clean the backs of our pictures routinely. Well, if you've got a housekeeper that does, I don t do mine. Anyway, start, tilt your picture out, wipe one way, Next, and don't rub back and forth.

So the object is to cover that swiffer turn it gray or black with dust. And if that means that you have to Not clean for three weeks or so. That's a good thing to do.

Another great way to collect dust in your home is take green contractor trash bags, cut them in strips and use painter's tape and put it along the walls.

The electrostatic attraction of the dust will allow you to collect large quantities of dust in a short period of time. you're going to be looking for number one mold.

So, mycotoxins, there's only five that cause disease in people. A HERTSME2 test measures that. Now, if you rent a home, or you're planning on moving, I would just do a Hertz Me Too to check for those five species of mold.

Or if you are in an apartment, because if your not investing for the future, you just need to know if the air you breathe is clean for you. If you own your home or your planning building and moving into a new home, When that structure's ready, we recommend test number seven.

Test number 7 from EnviroBiomics includes three things. The HERTSme2, which is the five species of mold.

Endotoxins, which come from those nasty little gram-negative poopy water bacteria that come in under the foundation of the home or from overflowed toilets or leaky dishwashers or refrigerators in your kitchen.

or and I should say and Actinomycetes, which is a gram positive bacteria.