

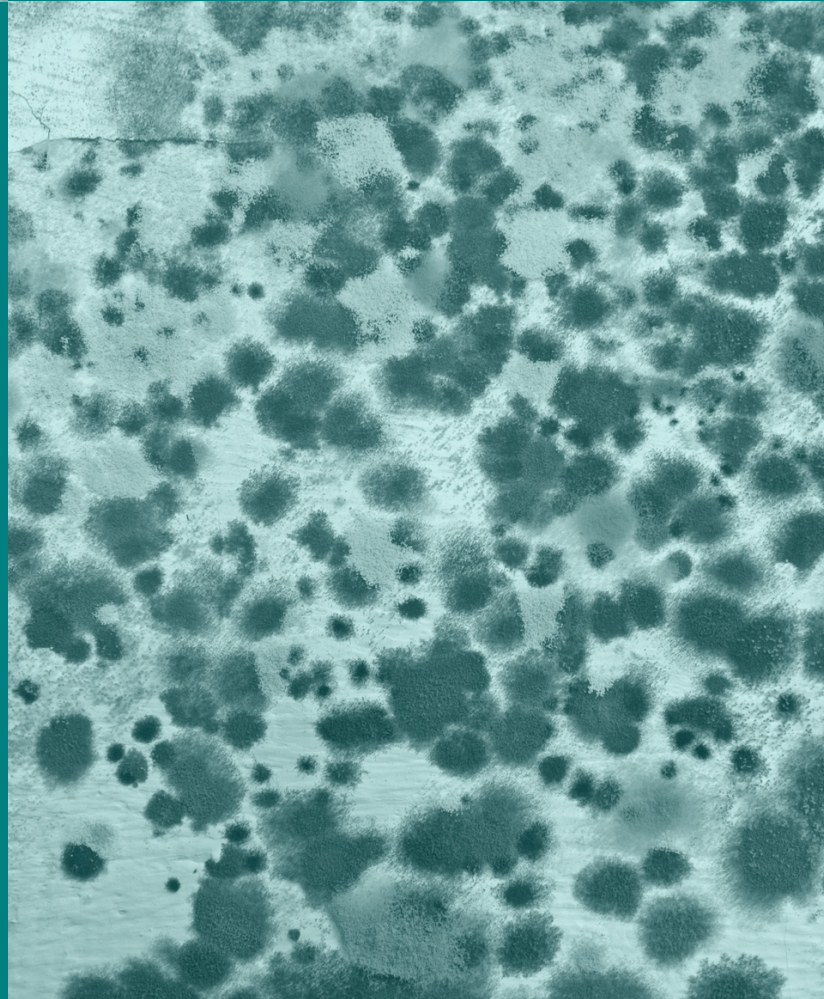


# MOLD

**What is mold &  
where is it found?**

**Mold is a type of naturally occurring fungus that is present in all environments.**

Molds can be detected both indoors and outdoors, and their presence varies with the seasons, moisture, temperature and with the availability of nutrient sources. Though it is virtually impossible to eliminate all mold spores indoors, **you can control the amount of mold in your space by taking appropriate measures.**



## What causes indoor mold growth?

- **Moisture** or elevated humidity levels caused by water leaks, shower spills, condensation or wet fabrics, such as bath towels.
- A **nutrient source** for mold to grow such as drywall, wood, particleboard, carpet/carpet padding, cardboard, leather and other organic material including dust and dirt due to poor cleaning habits.

## Is there a "safe level" for mold?

- **Mold is not regulated in California.** However, at SDSU we make every possible attempt to reduce the presence of naturally occurring mold in the residential communities.
- Mold does not affect everyone. Allergic reactions, similar to pollen or animal allergies, and irritation are the most common health effects for individuals sensitive to mold. Most symptoms are temporary and eliminated by controlling mold growth.
- Laboratory tests are useful in identifying the various types of mold indoors and outdoors, but tests cannot be used to define the potential for adverse health impacts. As individual sensitivities are variable, **residents must take action to help reduce the presence of mold** in your living environment.

## What is the difference between black-colored mold and black toxic mold?

- **Black-Colored Mold:** A mold that has a naturally black or dark pigment. There are over 100,000 species of mold, with many of them taking on a dark appearance that is easy to mistake for toxic mold commonly called "black mold." The most common black or dark-colored mold is called **Cladosporium**, and it has no known toxic effects.
- **Black Toxic Mold:** Black toxic mold is called **Stachybotrys** and is also known as "black mold." It is black or dark green in appearance. This mold has the potential to produce mycotoxins that may cause individuals with sensitivities to have allergic reactions.

**Mold types can not be identified by sight alone, and lab testing is the only way to determine the type of mold.**

## How do you prevent indoor mold growth?

- Keep your living space clean and dry. Be sure to remove dirt and dust from carpets, windowsills and HVAC vents.
- Use fans and windows to ventilate areas that produce moisture including bathrooms and kitchens.
- Allow ventilation in the room regularly by turning off the AC and heater and opening the window.
- **Do not open the window and operate the AC/heater at the same time.**
- Throw out the trash on a daily basis. Containers with moisture (½ full drink cups, to-go food containers) can add moisture to the space and provide a nutrient source.
- Clean up food spills immediately.
- If a dehumidifier is used in the room, the collected water should be removed on a daily basis.
- Do not place storage containers immediately against walls as this may lead to condensation.

## What to do if you suspect mold:

- Submit a **service request** through the **Housing Portal**. It is imperative that you submit the Service Request, as opposed to reporting the issue to your community front desk, to ensure the room number and details of the request are accurately documented.
- Once a service request is received, Housing follows a regimented mold response protocol in accordance with Environmental Health & Safety (EHS). The first step of the protocol is an inspection of the space, with a follow-up assessment from EHS, if necessary.
- If you believe you are experiencing mold allergy symptoms due to the presence of naturally occurring mold, you should seek medical advice from **Student Health Services** by calling 619-594-4325.



SCAN TO SUBMIT A  
SERVICE REQUEST