

BLACK MOLD AND PLUMBING FIXTURES

What is mold?

Molds are living organisms, and like all living organisms, molds need water to live. Molds can grow on almost any surface and only require dampness—a small amount of water—and a food source to thrive.

How can I tell if I have mold?

Dark gray/black stains or slippery residues in the shower, a toilet, or at a tap might be signs of molds. If you experience these conditions and ***do not have a water quality problem***, you likely do not have a health issue. These residues indicate the presence of naturally occurring airborne mold which is commonly seen in our area and is generally harmless.

Drinking water is disinfected at our water treatment plants to ensure that it remains clean as it travels from the treatment plant, through the distribution plant and into your home. If the water collects on surfaces, which remain damp or moist for long periods, it will lose its disinfectant and those surfaces can become a prime growth site for molds. These surfaces can include a shower curtain, under the rim of a toilet, and inside the aerator of your faucets.

Varying weather patterns can increase the potential of mold growth within the home as warm and cold-water flows through PVC pipes. Molds are more likely to grow in homes during winter when interior heat causes condensation, as a result of cold water in the plumbing interacting with the warm air inside the home. Building materials, such as drywall, can absorb the moisture and provide a food source for molds.

How can I help prevent mold inside my home?

Wipe the walls and door, or curtain, of the shower, and spray with a product that contains bleach or other disinfectant. Remove and soak your sink aerators in a diluted bleach solution, using an old toothbrush to scrub them. Use a cotton swab soaked in bleach to disinfect the refrigerator water dispenser. Be careful when using strong bleach! Take precautions to prevent bleach from splashing in your eyes or on your clothes.