

## **5 Ways to Prevent Mold Related Lawsuits and Claims**

**by Chris Wrightsman**

### **1. Have an Annual Mold Inspection Done on the Building**

Having a mold & moisture inspection done by a professional company reduces your liability. An inspector can help you locate any problems before a potential legal situation arises or verify that there is no existing problem.

### **2. Look for Signs of Prior Water Damage**

All mold problems stem from a moisture problem. As an owner you should look for stains around the windows and doors. You should check the bathrooms for moisture stains due to leaks or floods and look for poor caulking jobs that do not properly seal fixtures and therefore allow moisture in the walls or floors. You should check for any signs of moisture damage to the walls, ceilings or floors.

### **3. Look for Evidence of Condensation or Poor Ventilation**

When a room is not properly ventilated, condensation can form and create a mold problem. As an owner you should look for signs of poor ventilation. You should check bathrooms to ensure that there is either an exhaust fan or a window installed. You should check kitchens to ensure that there is an exhaust fan as well. Test any fans to ensure that they are in working condition. Check windows or sliding glass doors for condensation.

### **4. Check the Property for Leaks**

You should look for moisture under stoves, refrigerators, dishwashers & washing machines and look under kitchen and bathroom sinks. A leak in any location can lead to a mold problem if improperly handled. Checking regularly to ensure that these lines have been properly installed and maintained can save you from major mold problems and repair costs.

### **5. Check for Musty/Damp Smells**

In many cases a musty smell can indicate a mold problem. The smell can be due to a dirty HVAC filter, a previous leak or a current situation that you can't see such as a pipe leaking behind the walls. You may not be able to locate where the smell is coming from. A mold inspection is recommended in order to determine the source of moisture and extent of the situation.

Mold doesn't have to be a problem. *There is a solution.* Have your property inspected annually or have it checked more frequently if any of the above signs are detected.

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