

Water Intrusion & Water Damage

Quick Tips

Water is necessary to life on Earth but undesired water intrusion into a building via drips, leaks and the like can result in a variety of negative consequences ranging from stains and odors to loss of structural integrity. These damages can be disruptive and costly to both building owners/operators and occupants.

Remediation - Remediation is the process of 1) identifying and correcting the water or humidity issue contributing to mold growth, and 2) using appropriate cleaning and drying methods on impacted surfaces. Remediation decisions should be made based on the following: the scope of contamination, the size of the area of growth and any potential for occupant exposure in the absence of containment.

Prevention – Act promptly whenever a spill, leak or other type of water intrusion is noted. A prompt response within 24-48 hours will often prevent or limit mold growth and involves clean-up, drying and/or removal of water-damaged materials. Consider the following:

- Identify & repair leaks
- Venting kitchens & bathrooms
- Keep humidity <70% indoors
- Address water incursion
- Clean & dry wet spots within 48 hrs
- Maintain HVAC systems
- Keep HVAC drip pans clean
- Vent appliances outdoors



Guidelines – Depending on the size of the impacted area, remediation can be performed either by FMS employees or licensed contractors. The use of solutions containing bleach is not recommended when wiping down surfaces is necessary. Rather, water or solutions of water & detergent should be used. The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and/or area containment will be based on the size of the impacted area.

Small (<10 ft²) – May be performed by FMS employees wearing minimal PPE, i.e., nitrile gloves and goggles; An N-95 respirator is recommended; No containment required; Remediation activities may require relocating occupants of the impacted area.

Medium (10-100 ft²) – May be performed by FMS employees or licensed contractors wearing limited or full PPE, i.e., nitrile gloves, Tyvek suit, goggles and half-face air purifying respirator; Limited containment made from polyethylene sheeting and use of a negative pressure HEPA fan for exhaust are required; Block supply & return vents; Remediation activities require relocating occupants from the impacted area.

Large (>100 ft²) – Performed by licensed contractors only wearing full PPE; Full containment required as well as relocating occupants of impacted areas.