



October 2018

Mold – a Critical Issue



Our business is to provide our clients with rental and management solutions that help their properties operate smoothly, increase in desirability and enhance investment value.

Company Announcement

We are proud to announce that Christopher Barrow has been elected NARPM Marin-Sonoma President-Elect for 2018/2019!

Community Update

The team from Foundation will be at Marin Foster Care's annual fundraiser

Mold has been around a long time – literally, as long as there have been living organisms. Therefore, it may seem strange that it has become such an important and potentially dangerous issue. However, mention the possibility of the existence of mold to any reputable Property Manager, it gains immediate and urgent attention. The damages awarded by the courts are sometimes in the *millions!*

What constitutes mold and why is it a serious problem?

You can find mold everywhere, indoors, and outdoors, and it is, simply, living fungi. Although there are thousands of different species, there are generally five types of mold found in homes - Penicillium, Alternaria, Aspergillus, Cladosporium, and the fifth is Stachybotrys Chartarum, commonly known as “black mold.” It is the “black mold” that is considered the most dangerous of molds, but no mold should be ignored. In addition, “black mold” does not necessarily appear black, which can be deceiving, and any mold can appear dark or black.

Too much exposure to a toxic mold can cause serious health problems such as sinus and nasal infections, coughing, sore throat, skin abrasions, eye irritations, and upper respiratory infections. It can trigger other health issues such as asthma or hay fever.

What causes mold?

**Blues and Brews this
month!**

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Mold comes from many sources, but it does need three things to grow and continue - light, moisture, and a food source. In addition, food source does not necessarily mean something like old pizza or hamburger. It can be the carpet, carpet pad, wallpaper glue, building materials, and more.

Mold can come from leaks, standing water, running toilets, condensation, steam, roof leaks, moisture, flooding, poor drainage, poor ventilation and more. A family of four people can contribute 18 gallons of water a week to the air in their home! If not vented or handled properly, mold will form and become a problem.

What can prevent mold?

Keeping the property in good condition at all times is a key to mold prevention. Preventative measures are *definitely* more cost effective. Making sure plumbing works properly and water is not collecting anywhere, can prevent many mold problems.

Having adequate ventilation within the residence is also important. Working windows, heating, and air conditioning are a key factor here. It is much cheaper to retrofit windows than pay an attorney and a tenant thousands in damages, not to mention millions awarded at tenant in a lawsuit. Hire professionals to do work and check the heating and air conditioning systems, making sure they include ducting, insulation, humidifiers, and vents.

What steps can you take if mold appears?

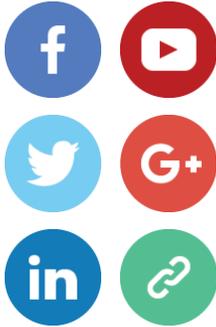
First and of utmost importance, do NOT ignore any issue concerning mold. If notified that a mold situation exists, ask questions, and take the necessary steps that we, your property management company, advise. The courts will not accept a property owner who claims they had no knowledge of the mold, or that the property management company is responsible. This is where the property owner and the property management company must work as a team.

Next, the extent of the mold must be determined immediately to discern the type of mold, the severity, and how it to treat it. It may be necessary to call a mold specialist to determine the type of mold and how it to eradicate it. There are often simple solutions for cleaning up mold. If not, it requires a mold professional to handle the problem.

If the tenant is contributing or causing the mold problem, counseling the tenant may be the proper action to take while treating the mold. Then there should be follow up appointments to check for further evidence of mold. There are people who do not ventilate bathrooms and cook with

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high heat in kitchens without using the oven/stove fans. Removing a tenant who contributes to serious mold problems may be a necessary move but handled carefully and with plenty of documentation, to avoid another potentially dangerous situation – discrimination charges. Nevertheless, whether the tenant is causing the problem or not, the property owner should act to eradicate the mold quickly and effectively.

The Bottom Line

Mold is a very serious issue - one you should never ignore. Use common sense, practice preventative maintenance, and, if there is any question of mold, take immediate action. Work with us, your management team, to prevent serious liabilities for your investment.

Have Further Questions?

We're here to help! Contact our office anytime 24/7 with questions about your rental: (415) 507-9600 or drop us a note here: [Contact the Team!!!](#)

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