Molds in the Environment - anaphylactic allergic reactions, existing health problems (such as asthma), or persons with suppressed or deficient immune systems.

are small pieces of the cell walls of molds which may cause inflammatory lung and airway reactions. These glucans can affect the nasal irritation, dizziness, fatigue, and nausea. Research on mVOCs is still in the early phase. Glucans or Fungal Cell Wall Components (mVOCs) have strong and/or unpleasant odors. Exposure to mVOCs from molds has been linked to symptoms such as headaches, pathways for mycotoxins can include inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact. Wide ranges of health effects have been reported following ingestion of moldy foods including liver damage, nervous system damage, and immunological effects. More studies are needed to get a clear picture of the health effects related to most mycotoxins. However, molds can cause common skin diseases like athlete's foot, as well as other infections such as yeast infections.

NOTE: Research on mold and health effects is ongoing, and this list is not intended to be all-inclusive.

Mold Toxins (Mycotoxins): Molds can produce toxic substances called mycotoxins. More than 200 mycotoxins have been identified from common molds and many more remain to be identified. Some of the molds that are known to produce mycotoxins are commonly found in moisture-damaged buildings. Reported symptoms and human health effects caused by contact with mycotoxins include: mucous membrane irritation, skin rash, nausea, immune system suppression, acute or chronic liver damage, acute or chronic central nervous system damage, endocrine effects, and cancer. Exposure pathways for mycotoxins can include inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact. Wide ranges of health effects have been reported following ingestion of moldy foods including liver damage, nervous system damage, and immunological effects. More studies are needed to get a clear picture of the health effects related to most mycotoxins. However, it is always prudent to avoid exposure to molds and mycotoxins.

NOTE: The presence of mold in a building does not necessarily mean that mycotoxins are present or that they are present in large quantities.

Microbial Volatile Organic Compounds (mVOCs): Compounds produced by molds known as microbial volatile organic compounds (mVOCs) have strong and/or unpleasant odors. Exposure to mVOCs from molds has been linked to symptoms such as headaches, nasal irritation, dizziness, fatigue, and nausea. Research on mVOCs is still in the early phase. Glucans or Fungal Cell Wall Components are small pieces of the cell walls of molds which may cause inflammatory lung and airway reactions. These glucans can affect the immune system when inhaled. Exposure to very high levels of glucans or dust mixtures including glucans can cause a flu-like illness known as Organic Dust Toxic Syndrome (ODTS). This illness has been primarily noted in agricultural and manufacturing settings.

Moisture control is the key to mold control. Molds need both food and water to survive. Since molds can digest most organic material, water is the factor that limits mold growth. Molds also grow in damp or wet indoor areas. Common sites for indoor mold growth include bathroom tile, basement walls, areas around windows where moisture condenses, and near leaky water pipes.

Treatment for diseases and disorders caused by mold exposure are varied. Topical ointment (fungal cream) is usually used for contact skin disorders, and corticosteroids such as prednisone, prescribed by your physician, are used for diseases or disorders caused by ingestion or inhalation of allergens or mycotoxins.

Work Site Review

Work-Site Hazards and Safety Suggestions:
Personnel Safety Violations:

Employee Signatures: (My signature attests and verifies my understanding of and agreement to comply with, all company safety policies and regulations, and that I have not suffered, experienced, or sustained any recent job-related injury or illness.)

Foreman/Supervisor’s Signature:

These guidelines do not supercede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.