Frequently Asked Questions – Excessive Moisture in Campus Buildings

What causes the excessive moisture in buildings?

Elevated levels of humidity and/or ventilation in a building, led to an increase in the amount of condensation that can sometimes form in areas of some buildings, often on or near windows, or on portions of the ceiling or walls near heating and cooling pipes.
This has been observed to occur sporadically throughout the campus.

Why do some buildings/rooms have mold?

Mold spores are naturally occurring and are found both outdoors and indoors. During the spring, summer and fall months, mold spore counts outdoors high, similar to pollen counts. High levels of humidity in a building, combined with the exceptionally wet and humid weather we have been experiencing, has caused an increase in moisture in some of the rooms in some campus buildings. If not addressed, excessive moisture may over time cause visible mold to form in localized areas. Mold can start to grow when the relative humidity exceeds 60% for a prolonged period of time as well as where condensation occurs.

How do I report a problem in a building on campus?

Any community member who observes mold, water stains, or excessive condensation on the walls, windows, or ceilings in campus buildings should promptly submit a request to Facilities Operations so it can be evaluated and addressed right away before damage, or odors occur.

I am experiencing symptoms like nausea, difficulty breathing and/or headaches, is this caused by exposure to excessive moisture or mold?

Mold spores, which are naturally occurring and are found both outdoors and indoors. During the spring, summer and fall months, mold spore counts outdoors are high, similar to pollen counts. Excessive rain patterns like we've been experiencing further increase spore counts. High mold spore counts outdoors naturally raises mold spore counts indoors. We are all exposed to mold spores daily. Excessive moisture can result in growth of spores. Most molds are harmless; but some molds can cause damage to building materials, unpleasant odors, and in sensitized individuals may cause symptoms similar to cold and allergy symptoms or trigger asthma in those who already have it. There are many possible causes of nausea, such use of fragrances, stress, dietary changes, etc. Nausea is not a typical symptom of a mold spore allergy so students experiencing nausea may want to consider a consultation at Student Health and Wellness and faculty and staff should reach out to their medical provider. Here is a fact sheet about mold from the university's office of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS).

Is there any risk to safety if I continue frequent a room that has excessive moisture? The University is aware of the moisture concerns in some buildings on campus and has developed a plan respond to and address areas of concern, Mold growth is a result of the elevated moisture conditions.

It is important to realize that some mold is present in every home, and for most individuals, exposure to large amounts of mold spores is usually needed to experience symptoms. The proactive plan for inspection/cleaning along with students promptly submitting work orders with concerns will prevent this.

For More Information

Dorm Room Indoor Air Quality Brochure