



# TOXIC MOLD SCAMS

## Don't Be Fooled by Toxic Mold Scams

If you have experienced a flood or other type of water related damage, you may find yourself concerned about the possibility of mold growth and the health risks associated with it. Although there are reputable companies that specialize in mold cleaning and remediation, there are also those that use the fear of toxic mold contamination as a way to perpetrate scams. These types of scams often cost tens of thousands of dollars and in some cases, people have actually lost their homes as a result. Here are some common signs of a possible mold remediation scam and tips on how to avoid them.



### 1) THEY OFFER YOU FREE MOLD TESTING

Reputable mold remediation companies charge for their services and use independent testing laboratories or a certified industrial hygienist (CIH) to perform air and/or surface testing

for mold. Anyone in the mold remediation business that offers to perform mold inspections for free, may be using this opportunity to fabricate false test results that show dangerously elevated mold spore counts or the presence of toxic black mold such as *Stachybotrys*. The fear of toxic mold contamination is the most common tactic con artists use to create very expensive mold remediation jobs for themselves.

### 2) THE SAME COMPANY OFFERS TO DO THE MOLD TESTING AND REMEDIATION

Some companies offer the convenience of handling both the testing and remediation work. This is another tactic that gives unscrupulous mold remediation companies an incentive to find mold. To prevent this, hiring your own CIH to do the

testing and create the protocol of what needs to be done can save you from being taken advantage of. Mold testing and inspections should always be performed by independent laboratories or hygienist's that have no personal or financial interest in the results.

### 3) THEY OFFER FREE CLEARANCE TESTS

The final step in the mold removal process is a post-remediation survey known as a final air quality clearance test. Most insurance companies and mortgage lenders will require a third-party clearance test before issuing payment for the work. This test is designed to verify that the remediation was done correctly and successfully and should be performed before any reconstruction work begins. However, if you are offered this test for free and you allow a remediation company to test their own work, you will have no way to tell if the work was done properly or if the test results are factual. An unethical remediation company will not fail their own tests and they certainly won't want to incur the costs to re-clean your home if their clearance test fails. Remember, the health and welfare of you and your family is on the line, so be sure to have an independent testing laboratory or CIH perform the final clearance and that it passes, before you pay for remediation work.

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