



EIMA's Position on Mold

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The EIFS Industry Members Association (EIMA) sympathizes with the plight of homeowners whose homes are affected by mold.

Molds tend to form where excessive moisture and suitable nutrients are present. Favorable conditions for mold growth should not occur in any properly constructed and maintained home or other building. Homes that are properly detailed, caulked and flashed will repel moisture, remain dry and present an inhospitable environment for mold. Where mold is present, a flaw in the construction process is typically to blame.

Homeowners concerned about the potential for mold infestation should be aware that the adverse health effects, if any, from mold are still a matter of debate and scientific study. The contention that severe health effects are caused by mold is controversial. Educational materials regarding the causes, effects and treatment of mold are available from the Foundation of the Wall & Ceiling Industry at <http://www.awci.org>.

While some homes affected by mold have synthetic stucco cladding, this is purely a matter of coincidence, not causation. Sources of moisture typically giving rise to mold problems include pipe leaks and breaks, faulty HVAC and mechanical systems, leaking windows, curtain walls, roofs and any other defects that result in wet or damp building materials. Significantly, the National Association of Home Builders maintains that all homes with a wood-based structural system – those with an exterior cladding of brick, vinyl siding, stucco or synthetic stucco – have the same potential for moisture-related problems. We at EIMA concur.

Prevention is the best "cure" for mold infestation. EIMA supports and advocates good construction practices to avoid mold problems. Good initial construction practices by the homebuilder form the first line of defense.

Proper and continuous maintenance is essential. According to the National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH), which is part of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, completed homes and buildings should also be routinely inspected for evidence of water damage and visible mold. NCEH advises that any situation permitting water infiltration should be promptly corrected to prevent mold from growing.

Really, this is nothing more than good common sense. If the roof leaks, the proper action is to fix the flashing. If the wall is permitting moisture infiltration, then caulking, sealing and other corrective measures should be employed. The Environmental Protection Agency has issued valuable guidelines available on its website at <http://www.epa.gov/>.

It is regrettable that the health of any homeowner would be adversely affected by careless or shoddy construction. However, it is wrong to place the blame on a product that has nothing to do with the problem.

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