

A Trusted Mold Remediation Authority?

I felt obligated to write regarding the November 2014 article by Paul Davis Restoration of Greater Portland on "Becoming a Trusted Mold Remediation Authority," specifically on their focus on classifying the types of mold on carpet and the use of "professional hygienists" to choose the right method for mold removal. I disagree with several of their statements:

1. Mold is mold and the approach toward cleanup or removal does not depend on the species present on the carpet or in the air. Generally, there will be up to a dozen different species of mold present in both air and surface samples. I have worked with numerous mold remediation firms (apart from Paul Davis) in Southern California and never have any of them suggested this approach. The CIH decides whether sampling is necessary, not the mold remediation contractor.
2. In my practice, air sampling is sometimes used to determine whether mold on carpet is negatively impacting the indoor air. Unless someone is actively disturbing the carpet via vacuuming or abrading the fibers or blowing air movers over the surface, indoor levels will most likely be "normal." Indoor and outdoor levels are compared to test a hypothesis regarding whether or not mold growth on carpet is getting airborne. Certainly not to "determine the levels that cause different types."
3. The EPA and many other agencies have stated over and over that testing is not always necessary. For a restoration company to state "our first action is always to take samples" simply says to me that their focus is to run up a bill for their uninformed client. This is not in the best interest of the remediation industry. If the carpet and/or padding is to be removed, documenting the types of mold on the carpet only serves to delay action and make the situation worse. Sampling may be useful if one is trying to link the mold to an already diagnosed disease or allergy in an occupant in the building who is looking to litigate to recover medical bills. In many cases, this is not a factor.

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