

## Press Release

DEKRA tips for preventing mold in homes



# Ventilation, Ventilation, Ventilation!

- ▶ Act fast if you find mold in your home
- ▶ Experts recommend investigating the cause
- ▶ Full ventilation prevents mold

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Mold in the home is not only unsightly, but can also harm human health. The spores often irritate the skin and eyes, or cause coughing. Prolonged exposure may also trigger or exacerbate asthma and other chronic respiratory diseases.

### **Mold: A risk for vulnerable people**

Asthmatics and older people with a compromised immune system must exercise particular caution. Studies have shown that children and young people who have regular contact with mold spores are far more likely to suffer from asthma than the average. Even pets can develop allergic reactions.

### **The main problem: Permanently high humidity**

"Mold spores are actually a normal feature of our environment. They become a problem if we make conditions too favorable for them and they are able to multiply on a larger scale," says Andreas Kraus, a DEKRA building expert. "The key factor is permanently high humidity."

Showering, washing, cooking, laundry – even house plants or aquariums – can all greatly increase humidity in the home. Very often, the ingress of moisture is facilitated by leaks or construction issues such as defective cladding, a burst pipe, a leaky roof, or a thermal bridge that cools a surface and produces more moisture.

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## **Professional help is needed for large-scale damage**

Quick action is necessary if yellowish or black patches appear in rooms or a musty smell is detected. Small-scale mold formation on surfaces can often be dealt with using commercial mold stopper sprays from the drugstore or hardware store. However, it is time to call the professionals if the cause cannot be identified or mold has already spread across a larger area. Germany's Federal Environment Agency classifies mold formation of more than half a square meter as severe.

"Painting over the damage without addressing the cause usually just postpones the problem," warns DEKRA building expert Kraus. Specialists can identify and eliminate the cause, and have the right equipment – such as driers – for remediation. It is also necessary to perform this work with great care. As a rule, large amounts of harmful mold spores are released during remediation work. Operators must therefore wear respiratory protection, goggles, and gloves.

## **Prevention is better than remediation**

Prevention is always better than remediation. Therefore, it should be ensured that no mold can actually form in the home in the first place. Each day, a three-person household releases between six and twelve liters of moisture into the ambient air. "It is therefore important to regularly remove this moisture from the air," says the DEKRA expert. The most effective way of doing this is by fully ventilating rooms for several minutes more than once a day, if possible by creating a through draft.

Care should also be taken to ensure that no steam is released into the air unnecessarily. For this reason, the larger quantities of moisture caused by showering, cooking, or washing should be evacuated directly outside rather than inside the home. It is also important to keep the doors to unheated rooms closed and place furniture and curtains at least ten centimeters away from cold exterior walls. In addition, it makes sense to check the relative humidity in rooms using a hygrometer – it should be no more than 65 percent.

[www.dekra.de/de/bau-und-immobilien/](https://www.dekra.de/de/bau-und-immobilien/)

## **About DEKRA**

*For 100 years, DEKRA has been a trusted name in safety. Founded in 1925 with the original goal of improving road safety through vehicle inspections, DEKRA has grown to become the world's largest independent, non-listed expert organization in the field of testing, inspection, and certification. Today, as a global partner, the company supports its customers with comprehensive services and solutions to drive safety and sustainability forward—fully aligned with DEKRA's anniversary motto, "Securing the Future." In 2024, DEKRA is expected to generate revenue of 4.3*

*billion euros. Around 48,000 employees are providing qualified and independent expert services in approximately 60 countries across five continents. DEKRA holds a Platinum rating from EcoVadis, placing it among the top 1% of the world's most sustainable companies.*