**Conditions for Mold Growth**

Mold and mildew can grow on just about any surface. In order for molds to take hold, four conditions must exist:

* Mold spores must be present.
* Temperatures must be between 35°F and 100°F.
* A naturally occurring food source (like wood) must be available. Other examples of a naturally occurring food source includes: cellulose, drywall paper, wood studs, etc.
* Moisture must be available in sufficient quantities. In most cases, the moisture must be liquid. While mold problems may exist in environments with relative humidity over 70%, the majority of serious, large mold growth inside buildings occurs where building materials are kept wet by liquid water or by sustained condensation.

Of these conditions that support mold (mold spores, warm temperatures, food and moisture), moisture is the easiest one to control in a home. You can control relative humidity indoors by venting moisture at the source and by creating warmer uniform temperatures throughout a room. For example, if warm ceiling air begins to cool around an air leak in a wall, the relative humidity increases, creating the required moisture for mold growth. Mold and mildew growth is common in cool, dark interior locations, particularly where there is a thermal bridge (at plate lines and uninsulated corners, for example), and in areas with poor air circulation, such as closets and crawlspaces.