AQ Testing Services, LLC

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Website Information

A.Q. Testing Services, LLC ("AQ") is a mold assessment consulting company and we do not perform mold remediation. All services provided by AQ are in accordance with the Texas Mold Assessment and Remediation Rules ("TMARR").

> According to The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC"),
> "Exposure to materials and structures contaminated with mold should be assumed to present a potential health risk regardless of the type of mold. Risk for illness does not necessarily vary with the type of mold or the extent of contamination."

- Be aware that mold growth behind vanity cabinets with AC drain lines is often caused by condensation associated with poorly insulated or uninsulated AC drain lines inside the wall cavity.

Important Information:

Since high relative humidity in a home/structure can go unnoticed and cause widespread mold growth that may or may not be visible, it is critical to monitor indoor humidity levels. Since high humidity can impact individual rooms away from wall mounted thermostats, we recommend using digital tabletop temperature/humidity devices in rooms on all floors. Monitor the readings daily if possible.

Ideal indoor relative humidity is at or below 50%. Relative humidity above 60% is conducive to mold growth. Although high indoor humidity can occur anytime of the year, it tends to me more prevalent in our climate during the hot summer months. High humidity can occur in any home, *regardless of its age*. The most common cause of high humidity is improper HVAC sizing and/or installation issues. If high humidity occurs, contact a reputable licensed professional HVAC contractor to have the unit(s)/system assessed for proper sizing and issues conducive to high humidity. *Proper HVAC sizing must be determined by Manual J heat load analysis only.* Be aware that many HVAC contractors do not perform Manual J heat load analysis as required by code.

Be aware that AC drain lines that terminate inside the sink drainpipe is a common source of mold growth caused by condensation inside the wall because cool/cold water goes into the *AC drain line that is not insulated inside the wall.*

Please call AQ if you have any questions or concerns about these issues.

General Information Regarding Air Quality Testing and Site-Specific Mold Testing:

In the Consultant's opinion, based on over 23 years of experience, general indoor air quality testing

often fails to identify significant hidden mold growth conditions. Our approach is a more forensic inspection and testing methodology to determine if hidden mold growth conditions are present within the confines of the Client's approval. We have used this approach for over twenty years.

The American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) publication "Recognition, Evaluation, and Control of Indoor Mold – 2nd Edition Copyright 2020" includes the following information:

- **Section 6.6 "Inspection for Hidden Mold"**
  Hidden mold growth is of significance because mold particulate (spores, mycelial fragments, etc.) has the potential to migrate into occupied areas and result in fungal particulate exposures to occupants.

- **Section 17.5.1 "Definition"**
  Hidden mold is defined as concealed visible colonizing growth of filamentous fungi on building materials or contents that is within the building enclosure but is concealed from view during a normal walk-through inspection. Hidden mold may be active, dormant, or no viable colonization. It may be concealed by building surfaces, structural systems, mechanical systems, electrical systems, furnishing, or fixtures. Hidden mold may occur in HVAC systems, in interior or exterior walls, or in building cavities. Condensation within building assemblies can promote significant hidden mold growth without outward appearance on exposed building surfaces.

- **Section 17.5.2 "The need to Remediate Hidden Mold"**
  In 2019, the consensus is that hidden growth should be effectively cleaned or removed. Mold is damage and areas with hidden mold are much more vulnerable to regrow in the event of future wetting events. Further, many government agencies and professional associations have referenced growth in wall cavities as a potential health problem and recommend that wall cavities not be overlooked during remediation.

- **Section 17.5.4 "Property Damage Resulting from Hidden Mold Growth"**
  Regardless of the potential health risks and indoor exposure levels, hidden mold growth implies decomposition of building materials. Moisture barriers can be deteriorated. Integrity of fire-rated gypsum board assemblies might be compromised. Structural components can be degraded. Hidden growth suggests a hidden moisture problem that might cause continued growth. Even if moisture sources are corrected, previously colonized surfaces with abundant residual spore levels are more susceptible to recurrent growth at lower moisture levels than clean surfaces.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health publication "NIOSH ALERT" includes the following information:

- Building dampness problems frequently occur because of suboptimal design, construction, and commissioning (assessing the building's construction and operation prior to occupancy) of new buildings.