WINNIPEG Air Testing

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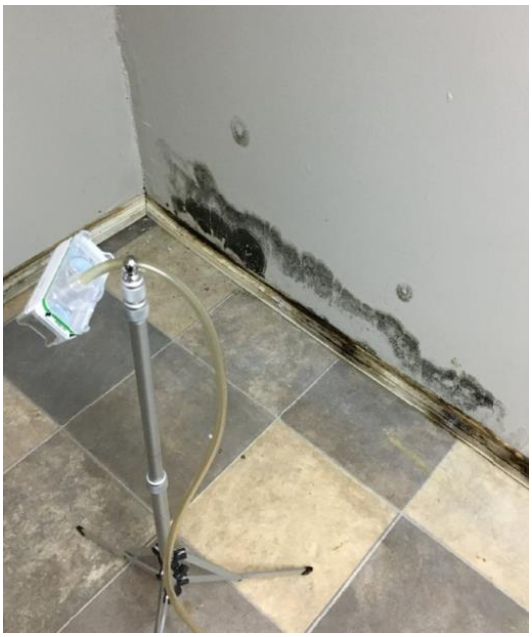
Health Effects of Mould



Moulds (spelt mold in the United States) may adversely affect human health through three processes: 1) allergy; 2) infection; and 3) toxicity. One can estimate that about 20% of the population has allergic antibodies to fungal antigens. Only a fraction of these would be expected to show clinical illness. Allergic responses are most commonly experienced as allergic asthma or allergic rhinitis (“hay fever”) and nasal and chest congestion. A rare, but much more serious immune-related condition, hypersensitivity pneumonitis (HP), may follow exposure (usually occupational) to very high concentrations of fungal (and other microbial) proteins.

Mould is an agent of opportunity and requires moisture in terms of water intrusion or wet building material to grow inside a building. Water intrusion brings its own disadvantages in terms of water damage and water staining. The World Health Organization says that excessive dampness and mould are a threat to health. Occupants of damp or mouldy buildings are at increased risk of experiencing health problems such as respiratory problems, respiratory infections, allergic rhinitis and asthma.