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Basic Indicators of a Potential Mold Problem[1]

- **The Presence of Musty Odor:** Caused by microbial activity, and known as *microbial volatile organic compounds* (mVOC), musty odor includes a complex mixture of chemicals (ethyl alcohol, aldehydes, esters, ketones, and other VOCs).

- **A History of Water Damage:** Cosmetic repairs are often made without concern for underlying mold problems. Sometimes water damage is found by inspection, revealing water stains, peeling and bubbling paint, efflorescence, warped and distorted wood, corrosion, separating seams in drywall, etc.

- **Suspect Surface Residues:** Blotchy, puffy and/or irregular surface material/staining (of any inconsistent color and/or texture)

- **Excessive Moisture:** Moisture meter testing reveals elevated or critical levels of moisture in suspect materials (as compared to readings in similar, non-suspect materials)

- **Source (Surface or Bulk) Sampling[2] Reveals…**
  - Evidence of actual mold growth
  - Excessive spore counts in background dust collected

- **Air Sampling[2] Reveals…**
  - *Indoor* total spore counts exceed *outdoor* total spore counts
  - Spore types detected at one or more *indoor* sampling locations do not appear in the *outdoor* samples
  - The quantity of individual spore types detected at one or more *indoor* sampling locations exceed those detected in the *outdoor* samples
  - The quantity of hyphal fragments detected at one or more *indoor* sampling locations exceed those detected in the *outdoor* samples

[1]Since background mold problems are not always obvious (yet carry the same health implications for susceptible individuals as obvious mold problems), basic indicators must be used to track-down hidden or camouflaged conditions.
[2]Samples should always be analyzed in a qualified microbiology laboratory.