

We perform air quality testing for numerous parameters (can be thousand of different chemical compounds). For residential customers, requests are usually mould testing or hazardous materials such as asbestos/lead (in homes built prior to 1986). Cost for air testing can range from \$1000 to several thousand dollars depending on the type and number of parameters sampled. Normally, we test air quality and compare to IAQ guidelines for what is considered comfort parameters (i.e. if these parameters are exceeded they affect a person's comfort but not a person's health). If a person is concerned about health, we always recommend referral to a family doctor. Most symptoms of poor air quality are non-specific and can be caused by some other health issue not associated with quality of air.

Sampling for mould is not part of a routine building assessment. In most cases appropriate decisions concerning remediation can be made solely on the basis of a visual assessment.

What is Mould?

Mould is a microscopic organism that breaks down dead organic materials. The home land of mould is leaf litter. Mould is found everywhere in the environment including the home. Mould can become a problem indoors if water is infiltrating the structure. Available water triggers mould spores to start growing on organic materials used in building construction. If building materials remain dry, then mould spores will not grow and have a 'stable relationship' with the building environment. It is very difficult to air sample for mould because there are no establish safe or unsafe levels. Normally we compare exterior mould concentrations with concentrations inside buildings to see if they are similar.

For residential customers, mould assessment cost can range from \$750 (assessment only) to \$1500 (assessment with mould sampling, which can be air or bulk) depending on the type and number of samples collected (travel costs not included). Sampling for mould is used as an investigation tool; there are no safe or un-safe guidelines for airborne mould exposures. The main allergic pathway for mould exposure is exterior airborne concentrations which occur in late spring, summer, and early fall in Atlantic Canada.

Sampling for mould is not part of a routine building assessment. In most cases appropriate decisions concerning if mould growth is present can be made solely on the basis of a visual assessment, which can be performed by the home owner. If the area is damp, evidence of water infiltration/damage, earthy musty odours, and/or visible mould growth is seen, then mould is present and should be remediated, no testing or assessment is required.

We have attached several documents regarding mould and Health Canada's Residential Air Quality Guideline. The information in HC document is dated and not scientifically valid, but is used as general guidelines. For example, to test all the parameters listed in the Health Canada guideline would cost \$5000 to \$7500 and would not provide a definite cause and effect of poor air quality in the home.

Also, you can visit web sites such as, Health Canada, Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corp., and the United States Environmental Protection Agency for further information on air quality in homes.

If a person is concerned about mould and their health, always consult your family doctor. Health effects associated with mould are non-specific and can be caused by numerous things not associated with mould exposure.