

OIAQC exists to promote healthy indoor air in Ohio and to promote optimum public health through education, advocacy, technical support and agency collaboration. OIAQC is a group of state and local health departments, organizations and public and private partners focused on improving indoor air quality for all citizens of Ohio.

Moisture and Mold in Your Home

Mold is everywhere. It is a natural part of the world.

- Without mold nothing would break down and decay.
- Mold eats what it lives on.
- Mold needs water to grow.
- Mold can cause damage to your house.

Moisture control is the key to mold control!

- Mold will grow in a home only when moisture is present.

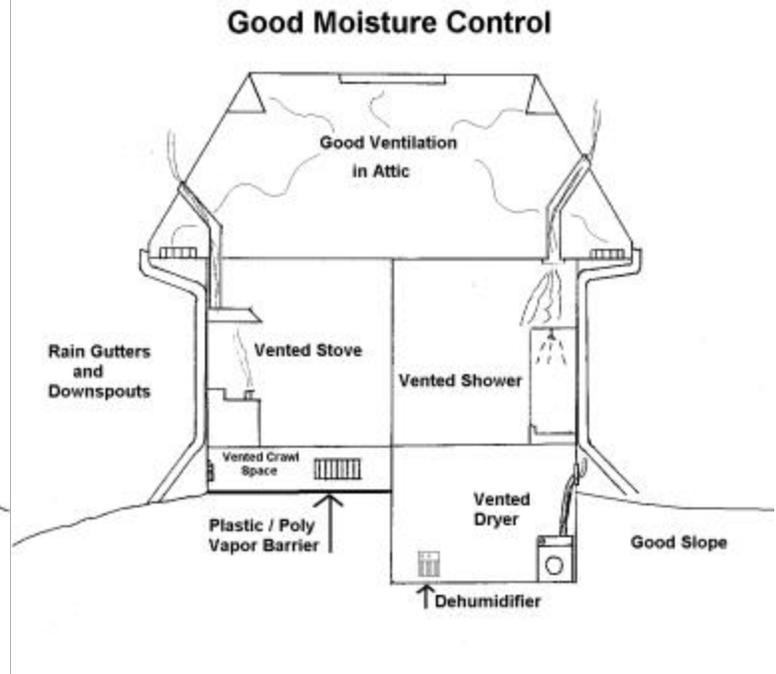
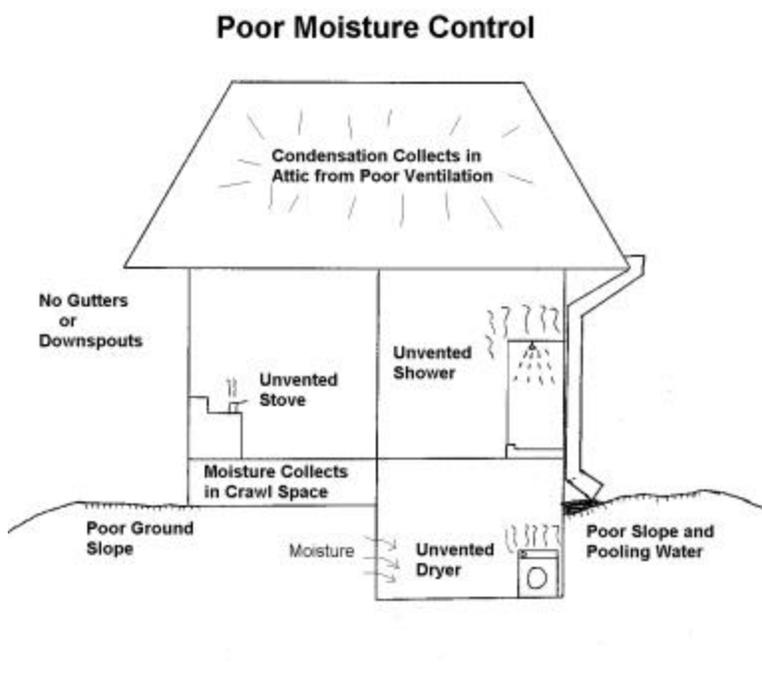
You may have too much moisture in your home because of problems outside:

- Leaks from the roof.
- Leaks in siding and around windows.
- Gutters/downspouts draining too close to the house.

- Ground sloping toward the house.
- Moisture entering through basement walls and cracks.

You may have too much moisture in your home because of problems inside:

- Leaks from:
 - Plumbing, pipes and faucets.
 - Dishwashers and washing machines.
 - Refrigerator and air conditioner drip pans.
- Vents and fans not leading to outside the house.
- No vents in kitchens and bathrooms.
- Poor attic ventilation.
- Condensation on cool surfaces from high humidity.



If you see condensation in your home you may have a moisture problem:

Examples of condensation are:

- “Sweating” on windows or toilet tanks.
- Moisture beading on walls or cool surfaces.
- Beads of water on cool pipes.

If you see condensation:

In Summer:

- Use air conditioners or de-humidifiers.
- Open doors and windows.
- Keep temperatures between 74-79 degrees.
- Turn on fans.

In Winter:

- Keep temperatures between 67-72 degrees.
- Increase air flow.
- Pull furniture away from outside walls to increase air flow.

Increase air flow (ventilation) to prevent condensation:

- Air flow is important for controlling humidity.
- Good ventilation takes the moisture from the kitchen, bathrooms and clothes dryer to the outside.

Good ventilation is also important in:

- Attics
- Crawl spaces
- Small spaces like closets.

What can you do about moisture problems?

- Fix leaks and spills within 24-48 hours.
- Clean up all water quickly no matter where it comes from.
- Keep the humidity in your home between 40% and 50%.
- Use exhaust fans or open windows when showering, cooking or running the dishwasher.
- Make sure all vents from dryers, stoves, bathrooms and heaters are connected to the outside.
- Gutters/downspouts should carry water 6-10 feet away from the foundation.
- Ground should slope away from the house.

Warning: Ventilation changes may affect dangerous radon and carbon monoxide gas levels in your home. Check radon and carbon monoxide gas levels in your home when you install exhaust fans. Install a carbon monoxide alarm and recheck for radon gas every three-to-five years.

For more information on mold, refer to the OIAQC Fact Sheets:

- Mold and Health Effects
- Mold Clean Up: Six steps to get rid of mold you see in your home

Internet Resources:

A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture and Your Home
www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/moldguide.html

Mold in Homes, Minnesota Department of Health
www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/indoorair/mold/index.html

Local Contact Information: