

## YOUR HOME – TOXIC MOULD

**What can you do about toxic moulds in your home? Moulds can cause illness, encourage vermin and increase humidity in your home. Here's how to treat it.**

### WHAT ARE TOXIC MOULDS?

Moulds are living organisms and reproduce by releasing spores into the atmosphere, similar to mushrooms and other fungi. The spores from certain types of mould can cause asthma, bronchitis and recurrent colds and 'flus in some people.

### HOW DOES MOULD GROW?

Moulds require moisture, a food source (such as paper, paint, clothing etc.) and still air. Seventy percent of mould problems are due to condensation coming from wet areas like bathrooms and laundry, while thirty percent comes from rising damp.

### WHAT IS RISING DAMP?

Rising damp may be evident in winter but is not always detectable in summer. Even minor signs of damp may indicate a far more serious underlying problem and you should consult a reputable damp control company when in doubt. Rising damp occurs at the bases of walls. Water accumulating there has a tendency to "wick up" through the capillaries that are present in the walls, be they brick, block or most stone; and through the mortar in which they are laid. Damp-proof courses are there to block this upward movement of moisture but are sometimes ineffective.

Rising damp can cause increased room humidity, thus encouraging vermin infestation such as cockroaches, silverfish and dust mites, as well as toxic mould growth - all serious asthma allergens.

### HOW YOU CAN ERADICATE MOULD AND RISING DAMP

Mould growth inside your home should always be considered potentially harmful and should be eradicated. You can eradicate mould by cleaning it with white vinegar (which should kill the current infestation), fixing any sources of moisture such as condensation, rising damp, leaking pipes, and the like, and by improving ventilation.

To cure rising damp, your damp control company or architect will advise the most appropriate solution. Common cures usually include consideration of a range of factors – e.g. correcting inadequate site drainage around the house, replacing or repairing the damp-proof course, repairing leaking plumbing and improving sub-floor ventilation.

**If you would like to talk to an Archicentre Australia architect about a particular matter, please call Archicentre Australia on 1300 13 45 13 or go to [www.archicentreaustralia.com.au](http://www.archicentreaustralia.com.au)**