



Home Inspection Services Newsletter

December 1, 2006

Educational Section: **Mold Testing**

As you probably know, H&A Services is not qualified to test for mold. However, we inspect homes daily, and talk to air quality professionals regularly. Here is our summary of the process in layman's terms:

Mold: Fungus that grows in the presence of moisture & organic material, at acceptable temperature. Mold spreads by releasing spores into the air.

Mold location: Anywhere where conditions are right including inside walls & under sinks. It can grow on sheet rock, wood, particle board, etc.

Mold Sickness: Some people have a high tolerance to mold spores and others don't. Some mold spores cause sickness, others don't (the mildew in a bathroom is mold). Mold can trigger allergies and asthma in susceptible people.

Mold Testing: First, a visual inspection of the property by a mold professional followed by an air quality test (may include sample scrapings of suspected mold). For air quality, a sample of air is taken outside the home and one or more are taken inside. These air samples are tested by a qualified 3rd party lab and compared in a formal report.

Cost for Testing: Ranges from \$500 to \$1,000 depending on sampling.

Mold Remediation: Removal (by a qualified contractor) of the mold and contaminated materials generally followed by chemical treatment.

Remediation Certification: After remediation is completed, air samples are taken, tested, and a report written by a qualified 3rd party.

Sequence: We urge clients to speak to mold professionals if there is known mold, suspect mold, or if clients are worried about mold, or susceptible to mold related illness. The professionals that I speak to often recommend that known mold cases go right to the remediation phase (why test if you know mold is present). For suspect situations (foul odors, water damage, etc.) testing may be appropriate. For clients with significant health concerns or history, testing is always appropriate! No professional will take the responsibility of talking someone out of testing.

Thanks to Roy Dunn of Dunn Environmental (480 539 2780) for proof reading this article

Inspection Item for Dec.: **Testing GFCI Receptacles**

(Each month, we select appropriate items so that over a 12 month period you are reminded to attend to most common household maintenance/inspection items.)

Consider inspecting the GFCI circuits: Before testing, know who will change the GFCI if it fails. When GFCIs fail, the circuit typically will be dead. This becomes especially critical if you have a freezer plugged into a garage GFCI outlet! **Note:** All electrical work should be performed by a qualified contractor. READY? Plug in a light, press the test button (light should go out); press reset and the light should go on. If either the test button does not shut-off the power or the GFCI will not reset, the GFCI outlet has failed and needs to be replaced.

Question of the Month: **What type of air filter is best?**

HVAC filters remove dust, animal hair, and other contaminants from the air before it reaches your air conditioner/heater. This keeps both the equipment more efficient and your home's conditioned air cleaner. I recommend micro fiber filters (\$10 to \$35 each) because they remove 10 to 100 times more particulates than spun fiber (\$1.50 each).

Safety Tip of the Month: **Holiday Lights**

Manufacturers of the Christmas tree lights attach a warning label advising the maximum number of light strings that should be plugged into each other. Pay attention to this warning – it is there to prevent overheating and the possibility of a resultant fire. REMEMBER, these lights are CHEAP. Do not repair; splice wires, etc. for the same reason. Please be safe this holiday season.

Drawing for December: **Bottle of Red Wine–Lauren's Pick**

To enter, send a reply email with "December Drawing" in the subject along with your name and Ph# to Lauren@hainspect.com Tony G of Glendale was November's winner.

Let our experience work for you. Over 10,000 inspections performed!



Daryl Gates



Mark Andrews



Lauren Andrews

H&A Services, LLC (480) 614-0015 (623) 561-1709 www.hainspect.com

To opt out of receiving our monthly newsletter, please send a reply email to lauren@hainspect.com with "please remove" in the subject line.

Lauren, Daryl, and I wish all of our readers a happy and joyous holiday season. Enjoy!!!!