KANSAS
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND ENVIRONMENT
Division of Health

Mark Parkinson, Governor
Roderick L. Bremby, Secretary

www.kdheks.gov

August 4, 2009

KDHE Guidance – "Mold issues in Kansas".

The Kansas Department of Health & Environment is concerned about the health risks associated with mold in housing and business.

The spores that develop into molds are abundant in our world. They are the fungi that consume biological matter causing decomposition. If a food source, moisture and proper growing environment are provided molds appear.

The greatest deterrent to mold growth is removal of moisture. Molds need water to grow. In housing and other buildings when water is allowed to infiltrate the structure mold and mildew will rapidly develop on materials that retain moisture. After storm damage or flooding drywall, insulation and carpeting will quickly allow for the growth of mold and will develop tell tale "musty" odors. Kitchens, bathrooms and laundry areas with leaky drains or plumbing fixtures are also likely locations for mold growth. Remove the moisture and remove the food source and you can keep your environment mold free. Since mold spores exist in the environment the best course of action remains prevention of mold growth in living and working environments. It is recommended that indoor environments be kept clean, dry and mold free.

It is a given that mold spores are an irritant and allergen for many people. This causes a public health concern relating to mold and its relationship to asthma and other respiratory illness. **KDHE does not currently have any legislative authority to mandate mold remediation in housing or business, and these issues are generally local housing code, landlord-tenant and employer-employee matters.**

KDHE does not provide air monitoring or mold remediation service. There are private firms that do provide these services but none are licensed or regulated by KDHE. The Kansas Department of Labor does regulate safe work environments and may be able to assist in extreme situations if mold is determined to be a hazard in the workplace. Local health departments or city building code offices may have authority over indoor mold issues but it is not common place in Kansas.

There are proven strategies to make homes safe and healthy, KDHE does provide assistance in these areas. Resources that are designed to help determine why mold is appearing in the home and what steps homeowners can take to remediate the mold safely and effectively can be found on the KDHE Bureau of Environmental Health web site.

BUREAU OF ENVIRONMETNAL HEALTH
1000 SW JACKSON ST., Suite 330, TOPEKA, KS 66612-1368
Voice – 785-368-7391 Email – BEH@kdheks.gov