

Are You Mold Sample Savvy? An Introduction to Mold Sampling

Sampling is a critical part of any comprehensive mold or environmental investigation because, in short, it gives us concrete evidence that can confirm or disprove suspect conditions. Samples provide the necessary data points to confirm our observations and help us determine the appropriate next steps towards a solution, while also providing you with peace of mind. If you have questions about sampling, you're in the right place.



What Are the Most Common Types of Sampling?

- **Air Sampling** - Testing the air for the presence of microscopic mold spores.
- **Surface Sampling** - Collecting bulk material, swabbing a suspect area, or lifting visible growth using specialized tape. Generally used to confirm visible mold-like growth.
- **Wall Cavity Sampling** - Is used to draw air from within a wall (or ceiling) cavity to test for the presence of microscopic mold spores.



Air Sampling



Surface Sampling



Wall Cavity Sampling

How Is Sampling Utilized as a part of an Environmental Inspection? How Are Samples Used to Help Confirm the Extent of Issues in a Property? At Mold Inspection Sciences, we use science-based inspection processes and procedures to identify potential areas of concern. Utilizing state-of-the-art moisture detection tools, infrared technology, and appropriate sampling, we can confirm the presence of environmental hazards, including the type and quantity of hazards present.

"As you mentioned, walking through her unit, there weren't a lot of glaring, obvious mold problems. It wasn't like there was black mold growing all over the walls. So, we dug deep, did our investigation, and honestly, the sampling we performed, and the laboratory analysis gave us all the information we needed."

Why Do You Take a Sample When There is Visible Mold-like Growth?

- Laboratory analysis can tell us if it is mold, and it can also tell us if it's NOT mold.
- Knowing the type and quantity of a specific hazard can help clients find the most appropriate and cost-effective solution.



THE SECRET LIFE OF MOLD PODCAST

"Incredibly responsive and communicative team. First-class service from appointment inquiry to report findings. 100% would recommend!"

- ADYSON STOECKEL
Mold Inspection Sciences
Google 5-Star Review



What Other Types of Sampling Are Available?

- **Dust Sampling** – Used most commonly to check for various contamination levels during an inspection and in post-clearance inspections.
- **qPCR Sampling** – Gives overall contamination rating and history of the property. Effective when used in conjunction with our CIRS Protocol inspections.
- **Bacteria Sampling** – Used if contaminated water loss impacts a property, like sewage or other grey or black water events.
- **Allergen Sampling** – Testing for common allergens like cat, dog, cockroach, dust mite.
- **Water Sampling** – Used to determine water quality and assess conditions like bacteria, heavy metals, nitrates, nitrites, turbidity, pH, and others.



How Many Samples Are Needed for a Typical Investigation?

After 18-plus years of conducting investigations, we can honestly say, there is no “typical” investigation. It truly depends on the assessment, the property’s unique needs, and how those living, and working are impacted. The property conditions and suspected issues will dictate how many samples are appropriate for each investigation.

How Do Consultants Recommend Sampling? What Is the Process for Determining a Mold Sampling Strategy?

Again, this is truly based on the property itself. Conditions play a substantial role in determining a sampling recommendation. Any area that’s impacted by some degree of moisture will warrant some degree of sample recommendation. At a minimum, an air sample will be recommended and if there is visible mold-like growth, then surface samples and air samples to determine contamination are likely to be utilized.

What Are Some of the Pitfalls of Not Collecting Samples?

We don’t know what we don’t know. Samples can tell much more than what we can see with our eyes and confirm any suspect conditions. Sample testing is conducted by our accredited and experienced laboratory. The data we get from lab testing is used to confirm the suspect conditions we observe and, in some cases, to disprove a suspect condition. The more data we have, the better able we are to define the next steps to help return your property to normal.

Why Is an Outdoor Control Sample an Important Component of Accurate Sampling?

To properly assess the indoor conditions, we must first collect an outside control or baseline sample. This is necessary because it is important to remember that airborne mold spores are everywhere, so even a home that does not have a mold “problem” will have some mold spores within the air. For a sample to be considered “normal” it should be somewhat consistent with the outside control sample taken that at that same day and time. In general, indoor spore counts should be roughly 75% of the outdoor counts and usually proportionately similar in terms of spore types.



Mold Inspection Sciences, our goal is to meet your needs as swiftly as possible while working to discover what’s going on in your property. If you have questions or concerns about the testing or inspection process, please don’t hesitate to contact us. **We’re here to help protect you, those around you, and your investment in your property. Contact Us Today! 800.619.MOLD (6653) | Mold@MoldSci.com**