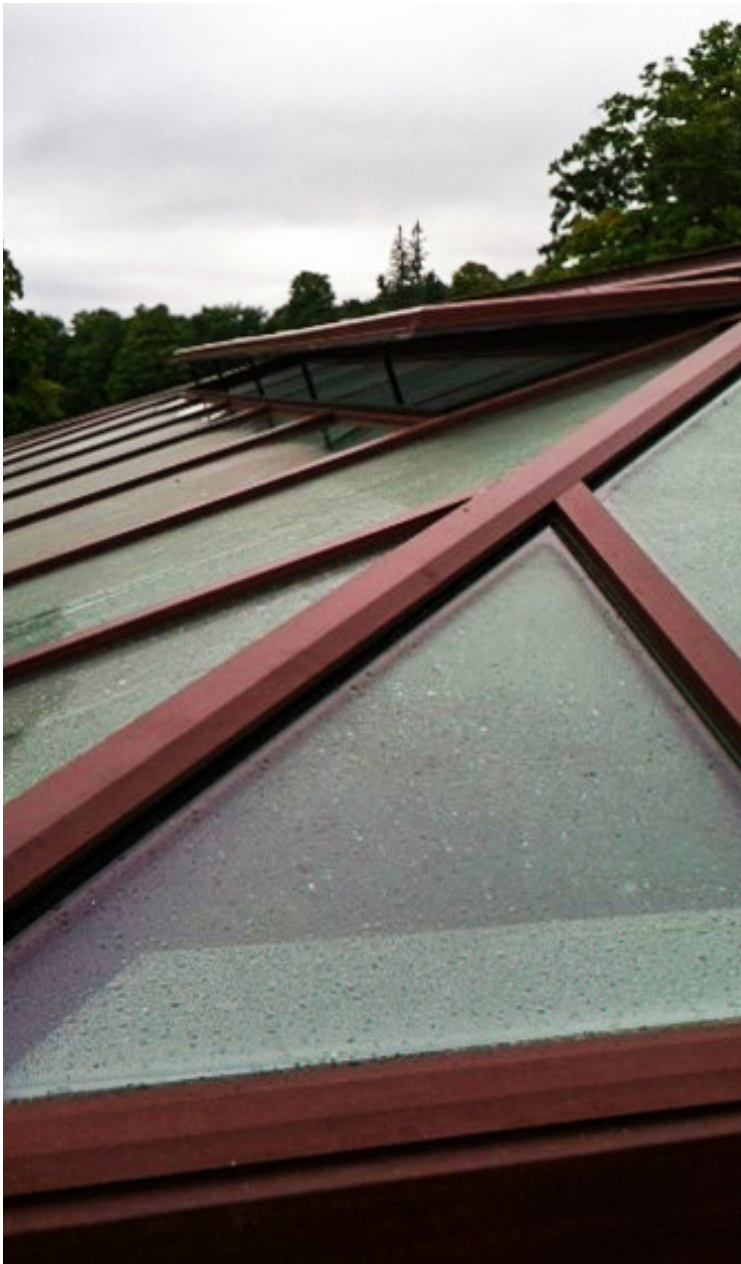


# CONTROLLING MOISTURE & MOLD



## Moisture on Windows

Your humidistat is set too high if excessive moisture collects on windows and other cold surfaces. Excess humidity for a prolonged time can damage walls, especially when outdoor air temperature are very low. Excess moisture condenses on window glass because the glass is cold. Other sources of excess moisture, besides overuse of a humidifier may be long showers, running water for other uses, boiling or steaming in cooking, plants, and drying clothes indoors. A tight, energy efficient house will hold more moisture inside; thus, making it more important to control the moisture levels. Humidifiers are not recommended for use in buildings without proper vapor barriers because of potential damage from moisture buildup. Use a humidity indicator to measure the relative humidity in your house.

Preventing mold and mildew in a building or home can prevent several environmentally-controlled illnesses from becoming more of a problem in the general population. Asthma and allergies, the two main illnesses directly resulting from mold and mildew, are the direct result of an uncontrolled interior or exterior environment. Controlling your environment is the most important thing that you can do to prevent the infestation of mold.

Two things must be present in the environment for mold to grow. An organic food source, such as dirt, dust, food and moisture. When mold becomes apparent, the first step is find the source of growth and eliminate it. Given the right conditions, mold can grow back in 72 hours. Controlling the moisture level in your environment will control mold growth and other unsightly conditions, such as condensation and water marks/stains.

## EPA Suggestions to Control Moisture:

- Fix all leaks and seepage.
- Put a plastic cover over dirt in crawlspaces to prevent moisture coming from the ground.
- Use exhaust fans to move moisture to the exterior.
- Turn off appliances, such as humidifiers or kerosene heaters, if moisture is present on glass.
- Use dehumidifiers and air conditioners to reduce moisture in the air.

## Steps to Remove Mold:

- Purchase a mask and use rubber gloves.
- Apply a 10 percent bleach solution (your local home improvement store will carry mold removing solutions; however, bleach is the most recommended by the EPA).
- Dry all surfaces thoroughly.
- Carpeting or fabrics and ceiling tiles may need to be replaced once they become moldy.

The final steps in maintaining a mold- and mildew-free environment are to keep it dry and keep it clean!

## Caring For Your Sunroom

It might be difficult to maintain a dry and clean environment in your sunroom, especially when you have a number of plants in the area. Get to know your greenhouse/sunroom. When the outside temperature changes, what happens to your room? Proper use of humidifiers and dehumidifiers, thermostats and moisture gauges can help control moisture levels; thus, helping to prevent mold and mildew within your room.

Mold can grow not only within the room but also on the exterior of the room. Since the exterior climate and moisture cannot be controlled, it is important to focus on the mold's food source. Leaves and dirt are natural organic food sources. Cleaning the outside glass and frame periodically will help prevent mold growth. Keeping weep holes clear and unclogged for proper weeping of the room will also aid in the moisture control inside the room.