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Information Please



VOL. 19 NO. 06

Mold in Washing Machines: Removal and Prevention Guide



Mold feeds on the moisture and detergent residue that the machine produces. With this in mind, here's how to remove mold from washing machines and how to prevent it.

Washing machine mold, which is typically found on the rubber gasket of front-loading machines, is a common household problem. It's not only bad for your health but for your clothes, too. This kind of mold is caused by neglecting to clean the machine or using it improperly.

Remember: just because a washing machine cleans laundry, this doesn't mean it cleans itself. Mold feeds on the moisture and detergent residue that the machine produces. With this in mind, here's how to remove mold from washing machines and how to prevent it.

How to Remove Mold from Washing Machines

• First, create a mold removal solution. You can either use a washing machine safe commercial mildew cleaner or make your own mixture. Here are several homemade cleaners you can create:

- 2 cups water, ½ cup hydrogen peroxide, and ¼ cup lemon juice — hydrogen peroxide and lemon juice are effective cleaners that combat mold and inhibit its growth.
- 2 cups water, ¼ cup lemon juice, and ½ cup distilled white vinegar — white vinegar is an all-around cleaner that you can use as an alternative to hydrogen peroxide.
- 1-part vinegar and 4 parts water — just vinegar and water can do the trick if the mold growth in your washer gasket is in sparse amounts.
- 1-part bleach and 4 parts water — use bleach if the above-mentioned natural cleaners don't work for you.

- Add your preferred cleaner into a spray bottle and mist the solution over the mold on the gasket. Put on rubber gloves to protect your hands and a dust mask to avoid inhaling mold spores. Then use a cloth or towel to clean the gasket thoroughly. For persistent spots, let the solution sit for a few minutes and use an old toothbrush.
- Once you've cleaned the rubber seal, it's time to purify the drum and hoses. Run a cycle on the hottest setting with your preferred mold remover; doing this will rinse away any mold traces and odors from your washer drum and hoses.
- If a musty smell persists, there may be mold growing behind the washer drum. Call the manufacturer (if your machine is under warranty) or a qualified repair person. They can diagnose your washer and fix the mold problem.

How to Prevent Mold in Washing Machines

- Use proper detergent only. If you have a High-Efficiency (HE) washer, use High-Efficiency detergent. Non-HE detergent leaves behind too many suds that promote mold growth. Use only the recommended amount of detergent for the same reason.
- Leave the door open after each wash to allow moisture inside the machine to escape. Doing so prevents the formation of a damp environment in which mold can grow.
- Remove wet clothes immediately after a wash. Not only does this prevent moisture and mold buildup, but it also prevents your clothes from smelling musty.

- Use a dehumidifier where you keep the washer if the area is humid. Humidity from outside the machine may contribute to the mold inside it, so make sure to fix the water or humidity problem. Set up a dehumidifier in the room.

Cleaning Your Washing Machine

As mentioned, regularly cleaning your washing machine helps keep it free from mold. Here's how:

- Run a cycle with baking soda. Run the longest and hottest cycle with water and regular baking soda (without laundry). Add two cups of baking soda directly into the washing machine. That's going to combat moldy smells that old soap and fabric softeners leave behind.
- Run another cycle with white vinegar. To further eliminate musty odors, as well as soap and fabric deposits, pour two cups of white vinegar directly into the machine drum and run the longest and hottest cycle. For extra freshness, add 10 drops of essential oil, such as tea tree or lavender into the mix.
- Clean the washing machine's interior. Wipe down the drum and agitator (if you have one) with vinegar and a cotton cloth. Remove any stains using a paste of baking soda and water and a soft sponge.
- Clean the rubber seal attached to the washer door if you have a front-load washer. It usually hosts mold. Clean it with a cotton cloth dipped in white vinegar or your favorite all-purpose cleaner.
- Clean the exterior machine parts. Now it's time to give your washer door, the outer surfaces, as well as the detergent dispensers a good clean. If the dispensers are removable, take them out first. Use vinegar or your favorite cleaner and a cotton cloth. If you have a top-load washer, clean the top of the lid and underneath it. For cracks and crevices, use a toothbrush and baking soda if needed.

For mold remediation, contact the PuroClean experts!

Follow these tips to eliminate the health risks due to mold in your washing machine and home. For mold removal in your property, our PuroClean damage restoration experts are standing by. We have the training and equipment to safely remove all traces of mold without contaminating other areas. Also, mold can hide almost anywhere, so we use safe and effective products to remove mold at the source, as well as repair or replace damaged surfaces.



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