

Cleaning Mold

Cleaning mold on uncapped and capped composite decking

About Mold and Mildew

Photos with mold



Mold and mildew are everywhere, both inside and outside, and feed on dead or decaying organic matter - they are one of the principle agents responsible for the natural recycling of dead plant and animal life.

To thrive, mold and mildew need four things: air, water, temperature (above zero degrees Fahrenheit) and a food source. These conditions are common wherever humans live, work and play. There is no practical way to eliminate all these conditions in an environment. The best we can do is to control their growth. Of the four conditions, it is only possible to exert control over two - water and food source. When it comes to thriving mold and mildew colonies on composite building products, the primary culprits are ineffective water management and excessive food source.

The reduction of water in an environment is best accomplished by ensuring water has the ability to flow away from a surface or area, minimizing the absorption of water and providing adequate ventilation so that water can rapidly evaporate.

Composite building products like other outdoor building materials such as vinyl siding, brick and gutters can allow mold and mildew growth.

Solutions

Capped Composite Decking

Uncapped Composite Decking

To minimize mold on your decking, clean your deck as often as needed, at least twice each year. Climate conditions vary in different regions of the country and may necessitate more periodic cleaning.

Removal of leaves, debris, and other organic materials that provide a food source for mold development is important.

If mold is present on capped composite decking, use soap and water to clean.

If mold is present on uncapped composite decking, there are many commercial products available for cleaning mold. We recommend the following commercial cleaners. For best results, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions and use cleaners within their stated shelf life. Do not mix recommended cleaning products together as harmful chemical reactions could occur. Never mix bleach and acids.

- [Composite Deck Cleaner & Enhancer](#) by Expert Chemical Company is a heavy duty, mildly alkaline chlorinated mold and mildew remover/cleaner.
- [30 Seconds® Outdoor Cleaner](#) by Collier Manufacturing, LLC is safe to use around lawn and plants when used as directed and is biodegradable once rinsed into the soil.

<p>For High Mold Prone Environments with Uncapped Composite Decking</p>	<p>Fiberon tested with excellent results, a coating option for high mold prone environments. Using the 30-day ASTM D3273 mold test, there was no mold growth after applying the weatherproofing finish. We also tested color longevity with over 2100hrs in a QUV chamber and the board remained color fast. We have found the following wood finish coating effective on uncapped composite boards after cleaning and removing all existing mold or mildew and applied and maintained as per the manufacturer's instructions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behr Premium Transparent Deck, Fence, & Siding Weatherproofing Wood Finish at http://www.behr.com.
<p>Prevention Checklist</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a deck that is dry and clean. Ensure gutters/downspouts and dryer vents do not discharge directly on decks. Ensure adequate ventilation under and between decking boards. Minimize water puddles under decks and the use of wet mulch up against the deck structure. Cleaning a deck just after the last of the major pollen events (when your car doesn't change color from the pollen anymore) will minimize the seasonal outbreak of mold and mildew. Periodically rinse off your deck using a garden hose with a spray nozzle, especially after the major pollen events. Skilled professionals may use pressure washers with wide fan tips but in the wrong hands your composite deck can be damaged. Exercise extreme caution when using pressure washers. Ensure the gaps between the decking boards remain free of debris so that regular rain showers can remove pollen and organic debris between cleanings. Avoid fertilizer over-spray.
<p>Online Resources</p>	<p>For more information on mold and mildew, refer to these online references:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U.S. EPA – "A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture and Your Home" http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/moldguide.html Building Science Corporation – online articles on mold and moisture control: http://www.buildingscience.com/resources/more-topics/mold National Association of Home Builders Research Center – ToolBase Services site: Durable Building Envelope Details for New Construction or Addition http://www.toolbase.org/PDF/DesignGuides/techset2_checklist.pdf

**Before and After
Photos Using 30
Second Cleaner**

