

The Cost of Mold Remediation

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As environmental investigators who perform a large number of mold & moisture assessments of residential and commercial properties, our clients often ask why their mold remediation project is estimated to be in the thousands of dollars by the remediation contractors selected to bid on the job..

The fact is mold remediation is costly. Dr. Ritchie Shoemaker says it best in his book, "Mold Warriors":

"Face it: you're not going to sterilize a building by using half-hearted, cost-cutting measures for mold removal. Don't even think that splashing some bleach on mold or painting over contaminated drywall, framing or plywood will do anything other than create tons of financial liability for failure to remediate properly. And don't let some bean-counting insurance adjuster get away with trying to send in a cut-rate crew who bring dollhouse-sized fans and no remediation equipment to dry out a flooded building.

Effective remediation is a serious business. It is expensive and an expert crew is needed for the job. Too often, the inexperienced remediation company can actually become part of the problem (and a target of the lawsuit), stirring up spores and contaminating more of the local environment."

Here are five good reasons why an expert charges thousands of dollars to remediate mold in a building:

- 1) The training to become certified in mold remediation (CMR) is expensive and time-consuming;
- 2) Many mold remediators carry mold pollution coverage in their general liability policy, and those that do not should carry it. This coverage protects the property owner should the remediation firm cause harm to the property by contaminating areas where mold was not located prior to the project start. Mold pollution coverage costs large remediation contractors tens of thousands of dollars a year;
- 3) General liability coverage is also expensive as mold remediation is considered hazardous work. Removing mold causes spores to be released and spores can effect the health of people who breathe or ingest them, especially the team removing the mold but also the people who will be working or living in the remediated building;
- 4) Experienced mold remediation personnel are hard to find and the good ones demand excellent pay. Would you hire inexperienced workers to remove asbestos from your home? Mold remediation falls under the same category of being a health hazard;
- 5) The chemicals, filters, respirators, HEPA machines and other specialized equipment remediators have to use on the job are expensive to purchase. In addition, all equipment has to be thoroughly cleaned after leaving the job site and all replaceable filters have to be replaced at a cost of around \$100 per filter.

While ESG does not perform any type of remediation, we are familiar with the costs of doing business. The average cost of remediating one wall in a home is \$3000, according to Kevin Bristol, president of Advance Mold Remediation. Insurers nation-wide say that the average cost for most mold claims runs between \$30,000 and \$50,000. That number is lower in North Carolina, but I have found that it is not unusual for a project to cost between \$10,000 and \$20,000.

To sum things up, mold remediation is not a project for inexperienced workers who carry a spray bottle of bleach and try to dry your property with box fans from Wal-Mart. Mold remediation is serious business that requires the proper equipment, training and insurance to back up the job.

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