



Wake Forest is committed to the health and safety of all students. For students living in University residence halls, Wake Forest is dedicated year-round to providing a healthy campus living experience. As a new academic year approaches, the information in this message, including a Q and A, is presented in the event that mold appears in a student's campus residence. Drawing on this information, students and families will be up to date on Wake Forest's response to this issue.

Mold spores can exist anywhere, are naturally present in the environment outdoors, and appear indoors for many reasons. If a student reports mold in their living area, University staff will take that information seriously and investigate.

As part of our protocol, prompt steps are taken to remove mold and provide information to the student that can help reduce the chances of its return. The University has addressed mold issues in the past and will continue to do so when the need arises.

Q. How does Wake Forest respond to a mold report?

A. Wake Forest has several methods of responding to reports of mold growth, in accordance to the University's Mold Management Plan:

- Trained staff identify and treat areas of where mold growth is found.
- Developed in conjunction with third-party industrial hygienists, all practices within the plan are in line with guidelines provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Trained staff members in Department of Environmental Health and Safety and Facilities and Campus Services are the mold assessors.
- Affected areas are cleaned and treated with products that have mold inhibitors.
- University Approved third party abatement contractors who specialize in mold abatement are used for areas that have mold growth greater than 10 sq ft.

Q. Is Wake Forest experiencing more issues with mold than in past years?

A. Recent incidences of mold indoors have been influenced by outdoor conditions, to some degree. This region of the state has experienced extraordinary rainfall in the last two years and that is likely a factor in increased mold reports. The University has spent significant resources to address the issues of mold growth due to environmental and moisture intrusion issues. We have engaged the services of a nationally known mold remediation company. Their work focused on all residences on Hearn Plaza as well as Bostwick and Johnson Halls on South campus. The scope of work included a thorough visual inspection of each room and common areas of these buildings, in addition to ceiling tile replacement, insulation replacement, repainting with a mold-inhibiting agent, and a thorough cleaning of all hard surfaces.

Q. Has Wake Forest taken a look at how other schools address mold?



A. Yes. Wake Forest has been in contact with several universities and learned that our procedures are similar to theirs or, at times, exceed theirs.

Q. What happens when a student reports mold?

A. Staff members trained to identify and assess mold quickly and promptly check the area in question. If mold is found, the mold management plan is activated by Facilities and Campus Services immediately to promptly remove the mold, determine its potential source (generally moisture in the immediate area) and apply an inhibitor.

Q. What should a student do to report mold?

A. If a student thinks there is a mold issue in their room, they should Immediately contact Facilities & Campus Services (hall@wfu.edu or <http://facilities.wfu.edu/request>) and/or Residence Life & Housing (housing@wfu.edu).

Q. Is mold an allergen?

A. Mold produces allergens, but like any other allergen, exposed individuals will respond differently. Some may have no reaction, others may experience hay fever-type symptoms, while others may experience more significant symptoms. It is important to keep in mind that many students new to North Carolina will [experience seasonal allergy symptoms](#), even without a prior history of this condition. Symptoms typically will arise during the first or second year at Wake Forest. Having never experienced problems with seasonal allergies, many students may attribute these symptoms to a sinus infection or become concerned that there is mold in their residence hall.

Q. Are there government regulations governing how the University must treat mold?

A. Mold is not regulated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) or the EPA. Mold is a natural byproduct of various conditions, often occurring in warm and moist environments where there is abundant vegetation such as trees, landscaping plants and ground coverings. According to the [EPA](#), mold cannot be totally eliminated in the environment unless extreme measures are taken constantly, as would be the case in a “clean room” laboratory.

Q. What might contribute to indoor mold growth, such as that found in some locations on campus?

A. Indoor sources for mold may be leaking pipes, standing water, damp clothing or towels and condensation in the area. The University is equally concerned about finding the source of the mold as it is in cleaning the mold. If mold can be prevented by taking certain steps, the University does so.

Q. What are some recommendations the University has made to students to reduce the likelihood of mold growth in their living area?

A. Some recommendations have included:



- Do not open windows while heating or cooling units are operating. This causes condensation and may contribute to mold growth.
- Do not block the airflow from your heating or cooling unit.
- Do not leave wet or damp clothes, towels or shoes in closets. Set them out on a drying rack until completely dry.
- Do not place potted plants or any other source of moisture on or around heating and cooling units.
- Do not use foam mattress pads (e.g. memory foam or egg-crate style) with the waterproof mattresses in the residence halls. The lack of air circulation between foam pads and waterproof mattresses does not allow any night time moisture to evaporate. The more dense the pad, the less the air will circulate to evaporate moisture. Moisture can pool between the foam mattress topper and the surface below, encouraging mold growth. Darkness and body heat can compound the problem.