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Hiring Mold Remediation Contractor (continued from p. 1)

himself as a mold inspector or remediator in New York. And few contractors have proper training and experience in dealing with mold. Therefore, a hasty hiring decision could make your problem worse and cost you more money, says Jeffrey A. Moerdler, a partner at Mintz Levin, PC, a nationwide law firm with a specialty in environmental law.

We will tell you why hiring a qualified mold remediation contractor is critical, and we will give you 10 questions to ask prospective contractors. We will also tell you what information to get from contractors' references.

Improper Remediation Can Worsen Problem

Improper mold remediation can lead to the following problems:

- Airborne mold spores spreading through the building because of improper containment measures—possibly contaminating previously “clean” areas or other nearby property and exposing the building's occupants to mold;
- Undetected mold spores hidden beneath the surface. These spores can lie dormant and reactivate with just a little moisture; and
- Money and time wasted in hiring another qualified mold remediation contractor to do the job right—by which time the problem is likely to be worse and more expensive to fix, says Moerdler.

What to Ask Prospective Mold Remediation Contractors

Here are 10 questions several mold experts suggest that you ask when hiring a mold remediation contractor.

1) Do you also do mold testing? An important question to ask when interviewing remediation contractors is whether the contractors also do mold testing, says Wes Carlton, vice president of MBA Technologies, a forensic indoor air-quality testing firm. A conflict of interest occurs when a contractor is hired to discover whether a mold problem exists, as well as to fix the mold problem, he explains. If you are going to get testing done ahead of time, make sure you hire a separate testing company to do it.

2) Do you have prior mold remediation experience? You want to hire a remediation contractor that has prior mold remediation experience, says Moerdler. Therefore, ask prospective remediation contractors whether they have prior mold remediation experience. If they say yes, ask about the nature and scope of that experience, he says. For example, ask whether the prior mold remediation experience was in a residential or commercial building and how extensive the remediation was.

The remediation contractor you hire should have experience with mold problems similar to yours. If your mold problem is extensive and a remediation contractor's only prior experience involved, for example, remediation of a house's bathroom, you may want to look elsewhere.

3) Are you affiliated with a recognized professional association? There are currently no government-imposed standards on mold removal or the contractors that perform it. Therefore, you can't require a mold remediation contractor to be licensed. You can, however, require that the contractor

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