

CALGARY MOLD REMEDIATION

Mold Causes & Moisture

Why mold grows in Calgary basements, attics and
bathrooms, how to size the problem, humidity, and
when to clean it yourself

4 Expert Answers from Remediation IQ

calgarymoldremediation.com/construction-brain

Table of Contents

1. Does poor grading around a Calgary house cause basement mold?
.....
2. Bathroom fan not vented outside in my Calgary house, mold risk?
.....
3. Window sills grow mold every Calgary winter, how to stop it?
.....
4. Found mold on the back of drywall during a Tuscany reno, what now?
.....

Does poor grading around a Calgary house cause basement mold?

Yes, poor grading around a house is one condition that can contribute to basement mould. Ground that slopes toward the foundation can put water against the wall, and moisture is what mould needs.

How Grading Connects to Mould

Water that enters through the foundation wall or floor can saturate drywall, insulation, carpet and wood framing. The Alberta OHS bulletin notes that mould can begin growing within 24 to 48 hours on a damp surface, so even a slow, recurring seep after rain or snowmelt can be enough. Grading is one possible source of that moisture; others worth checking include window wells that hold water, a weeping tile system that is no longer draining, condensation on cold surfaces, and plumbing leaks. None of these is more or less likely than the others without looking at the specific basement.

Before spending money on mould remediation, the water source needs to be identified and corrected. Removing mould without fixing the moisture problem means it is likely to return.

If you can already see mould, do not disturb it until you know how large the affected area is. Health Canada defines a small area as one to three patches each under one square metre. A healthy person can clean a small area using water and dish detergent, safety glasses, a disposable N95 respirator and disposable household gloves. Porous materials such as drywall and carpet typically require removal rather than surface cleaning, as Alberta Health Services notes. A medium area, meaning more than three patches or a single patch between one and three square metres, is better handled by qualified and trained maintenance staff. Anything larger than three square metres calls for qualified and trained mould remediation contractors.

Alberta Health Services advises that air testing for mould is usually not recommended, particularly when mould is already visible. Paying for air sampling before the source is found and the visible growth is dealt with rarely changes what needs to happen next.

If a contractor is brought in, there is no provincial licence or notification requirement specific to mould remediation in Alberta. The Alberta OHS Code does require that employers control worker exposure where mould exists or may exist, using the hierarchy of controls. Ask any contractor you speak with how they plan to contain the work area, how they will dispose of removed materials, and whether they carry liability insurance. For a prepaid contract of \$200 or more, Alberta consumer protection law requires the agreement to be in writing, with itemized prices, a completion date and a statement of your cancellation rights. You can check whether a contractor holds a prepaid contracting licence through Service Alberta's licensed-business search. A WCB clearance letter, which anyone can request online, confirms whether the contractor's account is in good standing.

Published Calgary-area mould remediation prices read in September 2026 range from roughly \$500 to \$1,500 for a small area, \$1,800 to \$6,000 for a medium area such as a 30 to 50 square foot basement wall, and \$3,000 to \$15,000 or more for a large area such as a whole basement.

Put any remediation quotes next to each other and check what each includes for containment, disposal of removed materials, and whether a post-remediation check is part of the price or billed separately.

Q2

Bathroom fan not vented outside in my Calgary house, mold risk?

Bathroom Fan Venting and Mould Risk

A bathroom fan that exhausts into the attic, a wall cavity or a soffit instead of outside is one of the conditions that can allow mould to begin growing within 24 to 48 hours on a damp surface, according to an Alberta OHS bulletin. The warm, humid air condenses on cooler surfaces, and if it has been doing so for months or years, you may already have mould in the attic or cavity even if you cannot see it yet.

The first step is to find where the duct actually ends. In a home built before 1990, the attic insulation may be vermiculite, which the Alberta Asbestos Abatement Manual says may be contaminated with asbestos, so have it tested before anyone moves it to trace the duct. If the duct ends inside the attic, you may see staining or mould on the sheathing or rafters nearby. Health Canada classifies mould by area: small is one to three patches each under one square metre, medium is more than three patches or a patch between one and three square metres, and extensive is any patch over three square metres. A person in good health can clean a small area using water and dish detergent, a disposable N95 respirator, safety glasses and disposable gloves, without bleach. Alberta Health Services notes that porous materials such as drywall, carpet and ceiling tiles typically require removal rather than cleaning. For medium or extensive growth, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation says to bring in qualified and trained mould remediation contractors.

Before you do anything else, fix the source. Venting the fan to the outside is how that moisture source gets fixed. Without that repair, any remediation is temporary. Keep indoor relative humidity between 30 and 50 per cent year-round.

A few practical points worth knowing before you hire anyone:

- Alberta Health Services advises that air testing for mould is usually not recommended, especially when you can already see it. Paying for air sampling before remediation in a visible-mould situation adds cost without changing

the plan.

- If there is vermiculite in the attic, Health Canada advises not to disturb it or attempt to remove it yourself.
- We found no City of Calgary permit for mould remediation itself, and no Alberta licence or certificate exists for mould remediation work. Ask any contractor what training their crew holds and what industry standard they follow.
- A prepaid contract of \$200 or more must be in writing under Alberta consumer protection rules, and you can request a WCB clearance letter online to confirm the contractor has coverage in good standing.

Published Calgary-area prices for mould remediation read in September 2026 run from roughly \$500 to \$1,500 for a small area, \$1,800 to \$6,000 for a medium area, and \$3,000 to \$15,000 or more for an extensive job such as a full attic.

If you want to hear from local contractors, the request form on this site sends your details to Calgary-area remediation contractors listed in the Calgary Construction Network directory.

Q3

Window sills grow mold every Calgary winter, how to stop it?

Window sill mould in a Calgary winter is usually a condensation problem. Warm indoor air meets the cold glass and frame, water forms, and mould can begin growing on that damp surface within 24 to 48 hours, according to an Alberta OHS bulletin.

Why It Keeps Coming Back

Possible reasons to check are indoor humidity above the range Health Canada recommends, air that cannot reach the glass, or a window that runs cold. Cleaning the mould without dealing with the moisture means it can return.

Start with the moisture, not the mould. Keep indoor relative humidity between 30 and 50 per cent, which Health Canada identifies as the target range. A basic hygrometer from any hardware store tells you where you stand. Run bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans longer after showers and cooking. If you have a humidifier on the furnace, turn it down through the coldest months. Move furniture or curtains that block air from reaching the glass, because still air at the sill stays colder and wetter.

For the mould itself, Health Canada classifies patches that are each under one square metre and number three or fewer as small, and says a person in good health can clean those areas. Use water and dish detergent, wear safety glasses or goggles, a disposable N95 respirator and household disposable gloves. Alberta Health Services notes that porous materials such as drywall and ceiling tiles typically need removal rather than cleaning, so a sill that is

soft, stained through or crumbling is a sign the material itself is affected. Dry the sill completely after cleaning and keep the area ventilated.

A few things worth checking once the surface is clean:

- Inspect the window seal and weatherstripping; a failed seal lets cold air in and raises condensation on the frame
- Look at the wall below the sill for soft drywall or paint bubbling, which can mean moisture has already moved into the wall cavity

If you find more than three patches, or any single patch larger than one square metre, Health Canada calls that medium, and the CMHC guide says qualified and trained maintenance staff should handle it; above three square metres, CMHC says a qualified and trained mould remediation contractor. If the mould has spread behind the drywall or into framing, that is a larger job. Alberta Health Services advises that air testing for mould is usually not recommended when you can already see it; the priority is finding and stopping the water source.

We found no City of Calgary permit for mould remediation, and no Alberta licence or notification requirement for mould work the way there is for asbestos. If you do hire someone, published Calgary-area prices read in September 2026 put small-area remediation at \$500 to \$1,500 and medium-area work at \$1,800 to \$6,000, with the spread driven by how far the moisture has travelled and whether any drywall or framing needs replacing.

If the problem is recurring across multiple windows or you suspect it has reached the wall structure, it is worth having a contractor look at it. Before agreeing to any scope of work, ask the contractor exactly where they traced the moisture source and what they are doing to prevent it from returning, because remediation without that answer is just cleaning the same spot twice.

Found mold on the back of drywall during a Tuscany reno, what now?

Start by measuring the patch, because Health Canada's size bands determine who should do the cleaning.

If the patch is small (one to three areas, each under one square metre), a healthy person can clean it with water and dish detergent, wearing safety glasses, disposable household gloves and a disposable N95 respirator. No bleach is needed. Because drywall is porous, Alberta Health Services advises that porous materials like drywall typically require removal rather than surface cleaning, so the affected section is normally cut out rather than wiped down. Before anyone cuts, check whether the drywall or its joint compound could contain asbestos (see below).

If there are more than three patches, or a patch between one and three square metres, Health Canada calls that medium, and the CMHC guide says it should be cleaned up by qualified and trained maintenance staff. Anything larger than three square metres is extensive, and CMHC says that belongs with qualified and trained mould remediation contractors.

What drives the decision and the cost

A few things shape the scope before anyone prices the job: how far the moisture has spread behind the wall (probe adjacent sections before closing up), whether the source of the water has been fixed, and whether there is any stipple, drywall joint compound or other material in the area that could contain asbestos. If any part of the house was built before 1990, Alberta OHS bulletin ASB004 lists drywall mud among the materials that may contain asbestos, and the Alberta Asbestos Abatement Manual adds stippled finishes. If you are unsure of the build date or the materials, have bulk samples tested before disturbing anything further. Published Calgary-area lab costs run \$65 to \$145 per sample.

For contractor-led mould remediation, published Calgary-area prices read in September 2026 run \$1,800 to \$6,000 for a medium job (roughly a 30 to 50 square foot basement wall) and \$3,000 to \$15,000 or more for large areas like a whole basement. A mould inspection or air-quality test, if you want one before work starts, runs \$200 to \$800, though Alberta Health Services notes that air testing is usually not recommended when you can already see mould.

What a fair quote should include.

Ask any contractor you speak with to confirm these items in writing before you sign:

- A description of the containment method to stop spores spreading to the rest of the house during removal
- Removal and bagging of all affected porous materials, not just surface treatment

- Whether an independent clearance test is included, and which lab will count the samples (clearance done by the same crew that did the work is worth questioning)
- Disposal method for the debris
- Proof that workers hold a current Alberta asbestos worker card if any suspect materials are in scope

There is no Alberta licence or notification requirement specific to mould remediation, so the written contract and the WCB clearance letter are your main protections. Any contractor taking a deposit before finishing the work must hold a Service Alberta prepaid contracting licence; check that before handing over any money.

Two quotes for the same wall can differ most in the containment plan, the disposal method, the post-remediation check and the warranty, so line those four up before you choose.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Calgary Mold Remediation. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified, licensed contractors and your local building authority (the City of Calgary or your own municipality) and Alberta Occupational Health and Safety before starting any asbestos, mould or lead paint project. Information is current as of October 25, 2026 and may change. Visit calgarymoldremediation.com for the latest answers.