

Did *you* KNOW?

IMPORTANT!

If you have a septic tank, use a non-chlorine cleaner, such as Borax, to avoid damaging your septic tank. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's cleaning instructions for your plumbing fixtures and countertops; chlorine cannot be used with some designer products. Use care with abrasives to avoid scratching fixtures, which will make them even more susceptible to bacteria. Never mix bleach with ammonia. Mixing them will produce dangerous, toxic fumes.

Black Slime Mold Found on Plumbing Fixtures

Molds are living organisms. Just as all living things need water, so does mold. Mold can grow on almost any surface and only requires dampness and a food source.

Your water is safe to drink. The black mold that appears in our customers' bathroom faucets is not found in the drinking water. Instead, it is caused by airborne mold spores that are naturally occurring in our moist, sub-tropical climate. Spores can enter your home through open doorways, windows, vents, and heating and air conditioning systems. Mold in the air outside can also attach itself to clothing, shoes, bags, and pets, and be carried indoors.

Our investigation found it is not a water quality issue. Over 1,000 different kinds of spores have been found in U.S. homes. Molds that have been found in samples taken by BJWSA from customer homes and analyzed by a certified, independent lab are: *Cladosporium*, *Paecilomyces*, *Phialophora*, and *Aspergillus*. Water samples taken from those homes and from our main water line were analyzed by a certified, independent lab, and showed that the water did not contain mold spores. Black molds, like other molds, will grow in places where there is moisture, such as around water leaks, windows, drain pipes, or where there has been flooding. Black mold grows well on paper products, cardboard, ceiling tiles, and wood products. They can also grow in dust, paints, wallpaper, insulation, drywall, carpet, fabric, and upholstery.

One observation. BJWSA has observed that the black mold in faucets may be growing in the aerator that is attached to the end of the faucet. Regular cleaning, by unscrewing the aerator from the faucet and cleaning with a mild bleach solution, is recommended.

It is impractical to attempt to eliminate all indoor molds, but you can keep mold growth in check by:

- Keeping humidity levels between 40% and 60%;
- Promptly fixing leaky roofs, windows, and pipes;
- Thoroughly cleaning and drying after flooding;
- Ventilating shower, laundry, and cooking areas;
- Using a non-abrasive cleaning solution with bleach*, such as Soft Scrub, to clean the areas where mold is growing.

MORE QUESTIONS?

Our website is packed with helpful information! Visit www.bjwsa.org