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## **MOLD AND MILDEW:**

The high outside humidity levels experienced in Eastern North Carolina increases the humidity problems that we all experience and this will require you to operate the equipment provided inside your home to keep humidity at acceptable levels. Humidity levels greater than 50% are considered ideal for promoting mold growth! Please review the information below and follow the suggested recommendations. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our office and ask for me personally.

Each human gives off several pints of water each day. Normal daily activities also put moisture into the air including cooking, washing clothes/dishes, drying clothes, flushing toilets, showering/bathing, etc. Mold needs moisture, food, oxygen and favorable temperatures to grow. Moisture is the primary cause of mold growth and one of the easiest of the factors to control. Your home was built with several mechanical devices to aid in the removal of moisture from your home including bath exhaust fans, microwave exhaust vent, windows and heating and air equipment. These devices are designed to remove the moisture laden air from your home and therefore you need to use this equipment to ensure that you maintain low levels of humidity in your home and you do not contribute to the growth of mold in your home.

Your home is very energy efficient and needs to be ventilated through the mechanical means noted above. Without proper ventilation, the humidity level in your home will foster mold growth and may cause uncomfortable living conditions. Lower humidity levels during the summer months allow the home to feel cooler at higher room temperatures. Lower humidity levels during the winter months allow the home to feel warmer at lower room temperatures.

Several indicators that you may have excessive moisture inside your home are:

1. Condensation on the windows of your home. This forms when moisture laden air meets a colder surface and the moisture condenses and forms water. This is the same concept as water beads form on a glass of ice water.
2. The air in your home feels "heavy" which would be similar to how air feels in your bathroom after a shower.

We have provided you with additional suggestions to prevent mold and mildew problems within your home.

1. Clean and dust your home on a regular basis and remove visible moisture accumulation on windows, walls, and other surfaces as soon as such accumulation

becomes reasonably apparent. This will help eliminate the “food” needed for mold to grow.

2. Operate the heating and air-conditioning system in a manner necessary to properly ventilate the home to prevent an environment conducive to the growth of mold and mildew, including changing the air filters(s) every 30 days. A primary function of heating and air equipment is to remove humidity (moisture) from the air of your home. During periods when the indoor temperature does not turn on the heating and air equipment, open windows to provide ventilation to your home.
3. Operate bath exhaust fans for at least 30 minutes after showering or bathing. Exhaust fans remove moisture laden air from the living space and discharge it to the outside.
4. Operate the kitchen exhaust fan for at least 30 minutes after cooking activities are done. Exhaust fans remove moisture laden air from the living space and discharge it to the outside.
5. Keep blinds slats partially slanted to allow proper ventilation between the blinds and windows. This will provide for ventilation between the blinds and windows helping to dry out any moisture that forms on windows due to condensation.
6. Operate room ceiling fans to aid in air movement and increase drying of water and water vapor.
7. Do not place beds, mattresses, stacks of clothes, books, etc directly against a wall. Provide for at least a two inch air space between the item and the wall to allow air to flow between the item and the wall.
8. Do not operate a humidifier or vaporizer. These devices put large amounts of moisture in the air!
9. Immediately notify RPM of any of the conditions below:
  - a. Any evidence of a water leak or excessive moisture
  - b. The presence of mold, mildew, or similar growth in the Premises that persists after Resident has attempted to remove it through the application of common household cleaning solutions or antimicrobial products.
  - c. Any malfunction of any part of the heating, ventilation, air conditioning, plumbing or laundry systems present on the premises.
  - d. Any inoperable doors or windows in the Premises.

After following suggested steps above, you may need to purchase a dehumidifier. A dehumidifier will remove moisture from the home. Dehumidifiers cost between \$175 - \$250.

If you follow the suggestions above, you should not have any issues. If you are concerned about humidity levels inside your home, feel free to contact the office and RPM can check the moisture levels in your home or you can purchase a humidistat at Lowes Home Improvement for around \$25.

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