



## Water and Mold

During the past couple of years, the issue of mold has emerged as a major complication for Homeowners Association Boards of Directors to deal with. The ramifications of mold not only effect the livability of the units that are affected, but also the Association budget. The mold issue also significantly raises the risk factor for the Association as a whole and impacts the Association's ability to maintain insurance coverage at a reasonable premium cost.

Because this has grown to be such a major problem for many Homeowners Associations, it is greatly helpful to familiarize ourselves with the issue of mold and it's effects. In this article, we will focus mainly on what mold is, it's cause, and one way that we can stop the problem before it starts.

### What is Mold?

Mold is defined as *a fungus, or the growth of that fungus, which decays organic material*. This fungus effects various elements in a unit, such as walls, as can be seen in the picture to the right.

Whatever the form that the mold presents itself in, or the location of it, it is always associated with a water leak. Complications from mold inevitably lead to the ramifications listed above. In order to avoid these disastrous complications, it is essential to have a Mold Prevention Action plan in place which can be implemented at a moment's notice.

Such a plan should include procedure for reporting an incident with mold, designated vendors for removal and restoration of the unit, and provision for documenting all activity that takes place when a water leak report occurs.

If you at any time notice a water leak in your unit, please be sure to call Assured Management Services right away. Water and mold can cause significant damage to a unit, and to the possessions inside. If the leak is allowed to get to the point where it molds, time, effort and cost will be significantly increased.

Future articles will feature information regarding dealing with actual mold abatement and how a mold issue can effect the Association's insurance viability.



*An example of mold in an extremely advanced stage.*