



EMSL Analytical, Inc.

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EMSL Order: 350705459
Customer ID: MOSO85
Received: 9/5/07
Analyzed: 9/11/07
Report Date: 9/12/07

3. Understanding the Results

EMSL Analytical, Inc. is an independent laboratory, providing unbiased and scientifically valid results. These data represent only a portion of an overall IAQ investigation. Visual information and environmental conditions measured during the site assessment (humidity, moisture readings, etc.) are crucial to any final interpretation of the results. Many factors impact the final results; therefore, result interpretation should only be conducted by qualified individuals. The American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) has published a good reference book covering sampling and data interpretation. It is entitled, Bioaerosols: Assessment and Control, 1999.

Air Samples:

Air samples are typically evaluated by means of fungal type identified and by comparing indoor and outdoor concentrations, complaint to non-complaint areas, or area of concern to areas of non-concern. In general, the levels and types of fungi in the indoor air (in non-problem buildings) should be similar to or lower than those found in the outdoor air. Higher levels of spores (order of magnitude) found inside may indicate that moisture sources and resultant fungal growth are present. Spore count results are influenced by geographic location, seasonal and diurnal variation, and biotic/abiotic outside conditions. For example, fresh snow cover on the ground will affect the outdoor spore count concentration.

Use the following guidelines when interpreting the results:

1. The composition and diversity of fungi in indoor, non-problem buildings should be similar to that of the outdoor air.
2. Compare spore count concentrations indoors and outdoors. Elevated indoor concentrations may indicate indoor fungal growth. Be aware that this is not always consistent and additional sampling may be needed.
3. Certain fungi are very good indicators of water damage. The presence of these spores, even in small quantities, indicates the presence of water damage. These indicator fungi include, but are not limited to, *Chaetomium*, *Fusarium*, *Stachybotrys* (including *Memnoniella*), and *Ulocladium*.
4. Different types of fungi grow at different levels of biologically available water. These differences in fungal growth suggest the degree of water damage or saturation. For example, *Stachybotrys* is an indication of short term, severe, or prolonged water damage over time.



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Fungal spores are found everywhere. Whether or not symptoms develop in people exposed to fungi depends on the nature of the fungal material (e.g., allergenic, toxic, or infectious), the exposure level, and the susceptibility of exposed persons. Susceptibility varies with the genetic predisposition (e.g., allergic reactions do not always occur in all individuals), age, pre-existing medical conditions (e.g., diabetes, cancer, or chronic lung conditions), use of immunosuppressive drugs, and concurrent exposures. These reasons make it difficult to identify dose/response relationships that are required to establish “safe” or “unsafe” levels (i.e., permissible exposure limits).

It is generally accepted in the industry that indoor fungal growth is undesirable and inappropriate, necessitating removal or other appropriate remedial actions. The New York City guidelines and EPA guidelines for mold remediation in schools and commercial buildings define the conditions warranting mold remediation. Always remember that water is the key. Preventing water damage or water condensation will prevent mold growth.

This report is not intended to provide medical advice or advice concerning the relative safety of an occupied space. Always consult an occupational or environmental health physician who has experience addressing indoor air contaminants if you have any questions.