



CREIA Advises Property Owners and Tenants of the New Mold Law SB655

Aliso Viejo, August 2, 2016: The California Real Estate Inspection Association (CREIA) advises property owners and tenants of the new Mold Law SB655.

On January 1, 2016, with the passage of SB655, California became the first state in the U.S. to establish that visible mold growth is a health and safety concern when it endangers the life, limb, health, property, safety, or welfare of the public or the building's occupants. The new mold law applies to hotels, motels, apartment houses & dwellings (including houses and homes) regardless of the date of construction.

Such 'qualified' visible mold is now unlawful under State Housing Law. Local agencies such as code enforcement officers or county health professionals are mandated to enforce State Housing Law and have authority to issue notices to property owners to abate qualified mold growth as routine enforcement. Dwellings with unlawful mold may be deemed uninhabitable and can be required to be vacated and/or subject to other remedies including fines and penalties.

Mold that is minor and found on surfaces that can accumulate moisture as part of their properly functioning and intended use is considered exempt from enforcement under the new law. Such minor mold is a 'housekeeping' task that is considered the occupant's responsibility.

In coordination with the new mold law implementation, the California Department of Public Health CDPH issued an updated 2016 **"Statement on Building Dampness, Mold, and Health,"** regarding the health impact, and remediation guidance for problem moisture or mold conditions in a property. In the document, the CDPH warns that the presence of unwanted water, dampness, visible mold, or mold odor in schools, workplaces, residences, & other environments is unhealthy. It further recommends addressing water damage, dampness, visible mold, and mold odor by (a) identifying and correcting the source of water that may allow microbial growth or contribute to other problems, (b) the rapid drying or removal of damp materials, and (c) the cleaning or removal of mold and moldy materials as rapidly and safely as possible.

Steve Zivolich, CREIA Certified Inspector, and nationally accredited mold expert has provided training throughout California for local city code enforcement officers. Mr. Zivolich advises, "Property owners and tenants should address visible mold, unwanted moisture intrusion and malodors promptly to avoid further property damage or negative health impacts. If you are unsure of the moisture or mold conditions, or need expert advice on what steps to take to resolve the conditions promptly and safely, I recommend

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that you contact a CREIA Certified Inspector that specializes in mold conditions by visiting the CREIA website at CREIA.ORG.”

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CREIA is dedicated to consumer protection and education. Go to WWW.CREIA.ORG/FIND-AN-INSPECTOR to locate a qualified CREIA inspector near you.

For more information, please contact:

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