

THE FIGHT AGAINST MILDEW IN FLORIDA: A Guide For Removal

Every climate can have a mildew problem. But here in Florida, the problem is especially challenging. Mildew is a major cause of unsightly areas on exterior painted and unpainted surfaces. Mildew or molds are fungi that form from airborne microscopic spores that have the ability to grow on almost any surface.

EXTERIOR SURFACES

Mildew growth is most common in shaded areas, although, it will grow in any area where the conditions are favorable - excessive moisture and warmth.

When mildew has grown on a painted surface, many homeowners will try to correct the situation by repainting over the mildew. This is not a cure. Mildew will grow through the new paint surface. Before a new coat of paint is applied, it is important that all mildew organisms are killed and that the surface is cleaned. Mildew removal on painted surfaces is relatively easy to do, but the correct steps should be followed or recurring mildew can be expected.

REMOVAL

Mildew may be killed and removed by using specially formulated commercial mildew washes. It is important to thoroughly follow all label instructions and precautions when using these products. An alternative method is to treat the mildewed surface thoroughly with a solution of chlorine bleach and water. This solution is prepared by mixing one part of household bleach with ten parts water. Repeated treatments may be required for complete removal. A thorough rinse with straight water is required to remove residual contaminants and chlorine crystals.

CAUTION: It is dangerous to mix chemicals. Household bleach should never be mixed with ammonia or any cleaners that contain ammonia. A mixture of these two chemicals will cause vapors that are extremely harmful or fatal if inhaled. While using this solution, it is recommended that you wear rubber gloves and eye protection. Be sure to wash hands and arms with soap and water after completion.

If you are not planning to repaint, test an inconspicuous area for colorfastness before applying the bleach solution to the entire area as some paint colorants are sensitive to chlorine. It is important that the surface be dry before any paint is applied.

Flex Bon's PREMIUM series of exterior paints is recommended on exterior surfaces.

INTERIOR SURFACES

Mildew can also be found on interior painted surfaces. It can be found in closets, kitchens, bathrooms and other areas of high humidity.

REMOVAL

Mildew can be removed in the same way as previously described. Again, be careful to use protection, not to mix chemicals, and test for colorfastness. The use of a fan or other mechanical device to help disburse fumes is highly recommended. The area should be cleaned, rinsed, and allowed to dry before repainting.

We recommend using Flex Bon's PINNACLE or PREMIUM series of interior paints.