

Maintaining a healthy indoor environment, including good indoor air quality, requires a joint effort by UNC faculty and staff; students; Environment, Health and Safety (EHS); and Facilities Services. No heating or air conditioning system can eliminate all pollen, dust, allergens or mold spores.

To reduce humid conditions and prevent microbial growth, good housekeeping practices and routine maintenance are necessary. Given a source of moisture, microbial growth (commonly referred to as mold) can grow just about anywhere within 24-48 hours. These conditions can be created by food, organic materials containing moisture, wet towels, water intrusion, or spills which are not cleaned up immediately.

When air quality concerns are reported, EHS will work with Housing Support as needed to perform student interviews, as a part of an indoor air quality investigation. We will then develop a plan to locate and remediate the sources of air quality concerns.

Report air quality concerns to EHS by calling 919-962-5507 or by contacting EHS online. EHS hours are Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Carolina Students can help by following the three C's: Cleaning, Climate and Communication.

- [Cleaning](#)
- [Climate](#)
- [Communication](#)

Microbial, or mold, growth thrives in wet or humid conditions. Maintaining cleanliness in UNC building environments can assist in improving air quality and promoting a healthy living environment. Items such as excessive books, paper products, carpets, food, plush furniture or spilled drinks can be a medium for microbial growth. You are responsible for cleaning your personal items in your dorm.

- Empty your trash regularly.
- Hang damp or wet towels, bath mats, clothing, or other items immediately and allow items to dry completely to prevent microbial growth and musty odors.
- Clean any spills immediately and thoroughly.
- Vacuum carpet or rugs, sweep floors and dust your room regularly.
- Dust all surfaces including desks and closet walls.
- Do not over pack closets to allow for air movement within the closet space.
- Report any biological growth immediately to your RA, [Housing Support](#) [1] and EHS at 919-962-5507.
- Cleaning of community rooms is the responsibility of UNC Custodial Services unless you are otherwise notified.

Controlling room climate is essential to managing indoor air quality and comfort. Moisture, humidity and heat provide conditions that are favorable for microbial or mold growth.

- Rooms with window AC units should be kept at 72 degrees and should be left on to promote air circulation. Window units are equipped with a "fan on" option that can be used during cooler periods when air conditioning is not in demand.

- If the windows are operable, it is important to **KEEP WINDOWS CLOSED** when the air conditioning is running. Condensation is created during the humid season by opening windows (hot air) and mixing conditioned HVAC air (cool air). The result of this condensation can create problems within the HVAC system.
- Do not prop doors.
- Close blinds early in the day to prevent the sun from heating the room. Turn off all lights when leaving the room.
- Do not tamper with the HVAC unit. Contact [Housing Support](#) [1] or your RA in your hall for assistance with temperature or humidity issues.
- Do not block the HVAC air supply, return air vents, or doors where the units are located. Reduced air flow to the HVAC system can result in excess moisture and promote mold growth within the system and serviced rooms.

Communication of any leaks or water intrusion to [Housing Support](#) [1] is required immediately, as biological growth can occur in as early as 24-48 hours.

- Water intrusion issues should be reported **IMMEDIATELY** to [Facilities Services](#) [1].
- Facilities Services and EHS should always be the initial contact for indoor air quality or water intrusion issues.
- Non-urgent maintenance issues can be completed through [Housing Support](#) [1].
- For emergency repairs call Housing Support at 919-966-2471. Please be advised this line is only answered during regular business hours (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.- 6 p.m.).
- If you experience an issue after the Housing office is closed, find the RA on call in your hall and report it to that staff member. They will report it as an urgent issue for response before the next workday.
- Report air quality concerns to EHS by calling 919-962-5507 or by contacting EHS [online](#) [2]. EHS hours are Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

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**Source URL:** <https://housing.unc.edu/residence-life/your-room/air-quality-mold-awareness/air-quality-mold-awareness>

### **Links**

[1] <https://portal.facilities.unc.edu/masterpg/reqHous.aspx>

[2] <https://ehs.unc.edu/about/contact/#pane-0-2>