



## Do It Yourself Mold Test Kits vs. Certified Mold Inspections

Is mold causing disruption in your life? Is it making you or your family members sick or just becoming extremely unpleasant to look at? Can it be toxic mold, such as *Stachybotrys*, or maybe it's harmless. How can you be sure if mold even exists in your home? What can you do about it? These are a few common questions that arise in a person's mind when dealing with a mold situation in their residence.

Many homeowners cringe at the thought of mold harming their loved ones and ruining their homes. They want to know what they can do about it and how to get rid of it. The first step in removing mold is to figure out what exactly you are dealing with. The only way to obtain this information is through mold testing. There are two routes you can take when testing for mold.

### Do-It-Yourself Mold Test Kit

Your first option is a retail household mold test kits; it is a do-it-yourself and inexpensive choice. Most are advertised to ensure rapid results of ten to fourteen days and peace of mind. However, what is the actual truth about home test kits? The complications with these test kits are copious. For example, do-it-yourself mold testing will not calculate exact amounts of mold or supply the detailed results of more expensive and qualified professional methods that may be necessary when assessing a mold situation. Directions must be adhered to exactly or results will be worthless. As mold is everywhere, even a secure home may have some spores land on a settling plate. As a result, a relatively un-hazardous species of mold may grow on a culture plate, needlessly sending the homeowner into a panic! Most importantly, unlike the professional care used by Titanium Laboratories, no other information about the molds' toxicity, quantity, or identity can be determined through such a test, exposing the test kit to be ultimately useless for true home testing purposes.

### Certified Mold Inspection and Mold Testing

Your second option in testing for mold is to hire a mold expert. When Titanium Laboratories' Mold Experts conduct Certified Mold Inspections, like any other professional should, we use top of the line equipment for a visual inspection, surface sampling, and air sampling, then we send your samples to an AIHA accredited laboratory for incubation and analysis. Unlike the homeowner who has purchased a do-it-yourself mold test kit, who is left with no information about the mold growth except for that it exists in their home, you retaining a company like Titanium Laboratories would know five very important factors.

1. Is the mold found in the area sampled is at elevated levels or at normal levels?
2. What kind of mold is present?
3. Why the mold exists, based on the visual inspection.
4. How to safely remove mold using the most expeditious and economical methods.
5. Recommendations to correct any underlying contributing factors to prevent future mold infestations.

Wow, that is a lot of information given by a professional; it's hard to even compare the two at this point, but I'll go on! The cost of an average Certified Mold Inspection generally costs between \$400.00-\$600.00. The assessment is certainly more expensive than a do-it-yourself mold test kit, but in this case you certainly get what you pay for. When receiving any Certified Mold Inspection, like one provided by Titanium Laboratories, your mold assessment should always include a thorough site investigation, an air analysis with an outdoor control, a full report consisting of the findings from the investigation, a copy of an AIHA accredited laboratory's report, a professional analysis, and corrective measures that should be taken if necessary. If remediation is recommended by your Certified Mold Inspector, in many cases you can undertake some of the work yourself to keep costs reasonably low. Titanium Laboratories will inform you on what you can do yourself and what tasks are best left to a professional. Titanium Laboratories provides solutions to their clients which is one of the most significant benefits of hiring a professional company to do your mold testing.

-Christina Cetrullo

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