

# East Coast Home Care

We care for your home.



## February 2013 Newsletter

**It doesn't matter who your Home Watch company is, until it does.**

We are licensed and insured.

We are a full-time business. Managing your property is not a hobby.

We have 40 years of residential construction

As communities age, homes have a greater susceptibility to develop the conditions that allow mold to grow. Homeowners and property managers are the first line of defense against this common problem in south Florida. This newsletter will cover the basics of preventing, discovering & remediating mold problems in our climate. It is not intended to cover all aspects of the subject as every occurrence is different and the variables surrounding prevention & remediation are too numerous to discuss without causing greater confusion.

### Conditions for mold and common sources

Mold requires moisture to grow. This condition is:

- Present in our climate naturally (especially during the summer / fall months) as relative humidity typically exceeds 70%
- Created from an external water source
  - Water penetrating the envelope of the home; roof, walls, windows or slab
  - Water leaking from plumbing or the air conditioning system

### Prevention – Part 1

Air Conditioners

- A/C systems should be serviced at least annually
- Air handlers should have a float switch that shuts off the system if the drain line clogs
- Thermostats / De-humidistats should be set properly to assure that humidity does not exceed 65% (60% would be better)
- All supply registers (air blows out) should be open when the home is vacant

The exterior of the structure should be maintained as weather tight as possible.

- Windows, cracks and penetrations (hose bibs, water softeners, etc.) should be sealed
- Gutters kept clean leading into the rainy season and downspouts/leaders set up to move water away from the structure
- Mulch kept to a minimum against the structure
- Vegetation cut back off the structure

experience.

We have over 20 licensed & insured vendors to address your capital improvements, repairs and/or maintenance needs.

**Never pressure wash your roof again!! Ask about our copper sulfate roof treatment**

### Prevention – Part 2

When a problem is noticed it cannot be ignored. It will not get better!

- Water stains – No matter how small, the source must be located and repaired. Thinking it will not rain that hard again or the wind will not blow in that direction again is not a good plan of attack.
- Small yellow dots on woodwork or black spots on walls – This is mold! One of the conditions above is present and must be discovered and eliminated.

### Prevention – Part 3

Once the problem has been rectified, the stains or damage must be repaired. This may seem obvious, but a ceiling stain in the garage or the back of a closet can be easy to ignore. It becomes very difficult to determine if the problem is continuing if you become used to viewing the stain.

### Remediation

This is the big can of worms! Every situation is different and you can overreact or underreact. Let's list a sensible course of action:

- The source must be eliminated.
- If it's wet – get it dry. Quickly! All affected areas should be completely dried out or removed.
- Mold should be killed or removed.
  - Broader-based **surface or airborne mold** (not behind wallboard or vanities etc...) should be killed. We have had good luck bringing in a **professionally accredited company** that introduces a high level of ozone into the home. This is a good solution for all areas that air can get at.

old behind building material – This is more difficult as rugs, baseboard, vanities or wallboard material may need to be removed.

### Mold Summary

- Reduce or eliminate moisture
- Address issues immediately
- Completely repair affected areas