



Microbe Guard protects against mold

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By Ken Francis- Staff Writer

Mold..

Ask any home builder or insurance agent and they'll tell you that it's one of the biggest, most costly problems with new homes. A recent Harvard University study of 10,000 homes across the U.S. found half had mold damage. A 1999 Mayo Clinic study cited that mold as the cause for nearly all the chronic sinus infections afflicting 37 million Americans. The insurance industry paid more than \$3 billion in mold claims in 2002 and more than \$9 billion in 2003. Beginning in spring, 2004, the insurance industry nationwide began excluding mold coverage from all homeowner and builder general liability policies.

Why is mold such a problem?

"Building codes have changed. Houses used to be able to breathe, but now they're sealed up tight," says Luke Stewart, Operations Specialist at Microbe Guard of Clearwater. "Now when you have mold it's not because the house wasn't built right. It's just the way the codes are." Stewart has been dealing with and conquering the mold problems for the last three years using Microbe Guard, an antimicrobial product used to prevent mold, bacteria and fungus growth. It was developed by Dow Corning in the 1970's and has been used throughout the U.S. for over 20 years in new construction. After the owner moved Microbe Guard, Inc. headquarters from Florida to Minnesota, Stewart found out about the product and started the first franchise in Minnesota. His company has applied the product to over 300 new homes. Builders and homeowners have been extremely satisfied with the results. "With a new product, some people are skeptical, he says." "But so far every guy that's used it once is now using it on every one of his houses."

Microbe Guard is water based spray applied to the entire substructure of the home. It bonds to the wood and concrete materials, creating a new surface that is impervious to mold. The product forms a colorless, odorless positively charged polymer that forms a permanent chemical bond to the surface material. Microorganisms that come into contact with the treated surface are electrically shocked and killed. But since there is no transfer of the product to the microorganism, the product never loses strength and remains effective. Microbe Guard is

applied to the entire substrate of the new construction after the electrical rough-in and before insulation.

Every site is first inspected by certified technicians, noting any potential problem areas. A meticulous HEPA vacuuming follows to insure the product is applied to clean surfaces. All windows, doors, bathtubs and other areas where the product could affect the finish are protected with poly before Microbe Guard is sprayed. The application usually takes between five and six hours for an average 2,500 square foot home. It dries in about an hour, so insulation can often be done the same day. It can be applied as long as temperatures are above freezing. Microbe Guard costs about a dollar a square foot - a small price to pay to protect the biggest investment most people ever make. Stewart, who has seen mold problems on homes just a month old, says he is thoroughly convinced the product works. "The second house we sprayed, the finished basement flooded. It had six inches of standing water and the walls were soaking wet," he says. "It was two years after we sprayed. We ripped the sheetrock out. Everything was wet, but there was absolutely no mold."

Microbe Guard comes with a 25-year manufacturer's warranty for applications on new construction. Builders benefit by getting higher sale values on a new home and eliminating potential lawsuits. Homeowners benefit with peace of mind knowing they have made a wise decision to protect their family and their investment from the effects of mold. For more information about Microbe Guard of Clearwater contact Stewart at 320-309-4741 or Rosalie Bell at 763-234-3439 or check their website at www.microbeguardmn.com.

