

# **The Worst Crawl Space Issue**

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Your crawl space doesn't have to be the deserted space in the house. In fact, it can become a great storage asset if in the appropriate condition. Consider the environment before you think about using it for storage. Keep reading if you want to know why this space isn't in the greatest condition and if you want it to get better.

## A Moist Crawl Space

Did you walk into your crawl space and become overwhelmed by the moisture in the air? Most likely the weather outside has been hot. The air will cool once that hot air enters the space. Every one degree cooled, the relative humidity rises by 2.2 percent. So, it can easily become very humid.

Beyond the moist feeling, this moisture can cause a lot of problems, including mold -- which is probably one of the biggest concerns you will have.

## Where Mold Comes From & Its Effects

Once your crawl space is moist it's pretty close to becoming a perfect environment to grow mold! Like people, mold needs a place to live, eat, and drink. Mold typically thrives in an environment with plenty of organic material to eat.

If it has paper, wood, or any such materials, you are feeding your mold quite well. Once there's moisture, a relative humidity of at least 70 percent, and organic material, you can be sure to grow mold!

## Mold & Must

As the mold begins to develop you can expect to smell something musty. We all know the musty smell. Did you know that the smell is coming from mold? If there's a musty odor, there must be mold.

Don't feel gross. Don't think that your home is dirty and disgusting. There are plenty of homeowners who have had mold and must and now their crawl space is in pristine condition.

Just as you shouldn't think your home is destroyed, you can't forget the huge influence mold has in your home.

Mold has to be removed. The best way to remove mold is to ask an expert. The mold will not go away by simply wiping it from a surface. Mold can grow in 24 hours and if the conditions haven't changed, then tomorrow you'll be wiping more mold buildup from the same surface.

## Fix the Leakage Before You Encapsulate

The best way to change the environment and truly eliminate a mold problem is to attack the moisture.

Many crawl spaces flood easily when it rains. This may be because there is a lot of water already in the ground beneath your home. This water may quickly rise even with a small amount of rain. It will flood and because there is still a lot of water in the soil, the space will remain wet and may never be able to return itself to a dry state.

However, by installing a sump pump system you can fix the ground water leakage. Now, your space will be well on its way to becoming a dry space! A sump pump is placed in a pit beneath the surface. Once water accumulates in the soil, the sump pump diverts the water out and to a location far from your home. This way the same water won't refill your space.

## Encapsulation

After installing the sump pump you can encapsulate the crawl space with a vapor barrier. This will separate the floor from the environment making it much cleaner and more appealing. This barrier will also prevent moisture from rising into the space.

## Seal the Vents

Next, the vents will get sealed. By sealing the vents hot air is being prevented from entering the environment. This thereby eliminates the high relative humidity. If you have a sump pump system, a vapor barrier, and a closed vent, then all you need now is a dehumidifier.

## Dehumidification

Dehumidification is the final step in the dry out process. A dehumidifier will remove condensation and moisture from the air.

## The Results!

You can expect that this space will be kept dry. Although there may be pipe bursts and other unexpected occurrences that cause excess water to enter your crawl space, by following these steps, you can be confident that your mold problems and moisture problems have been relieved.

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