

## Homeowner Myths

### **Myth #1: Bleach kills mold**

Truth: Bleach does not kill mold effectively... ammonia is generally more effective.  
Check out these websites for more info:

[www.moldinspector.com/bleach-ineffective-mold.htm](http://www.moldinspector.com/bleach-ineffective-mold.htm)

<http://www.goaboveboard.com/newsmm.htm>

1. It is too diluted and thus too weak to permanently kill mold unless the mold is simply sitting on top of a hard surface like a counter top or sink.
2. What little killing power chlorine bleach does have is diminished significantly as the bleach sits in warehouses and on grocery store shelves or inside your home or business [50% loss in killing power in just the first 90 days inside a never-opened jug or container]. Chlorine ions constantly escape through the plastic walls of the containers.
3. Chlorine bleach's ion structure also prevents chlorine from penetrating into porous materials such as dry wall and wood. It just stays on the outside surface, unable to reach mold's enzyme roots, growing inside the porous construction materials. When you spray porous surface molds with bleach, the water in the solution soaks into the wood while the bleach chemical sits on top of the surface, gasses off, and thus only partially kills the surface layer of mold, meanwhile the water penetration of the building materials fosters further mold growth.
4. **Chlorine Bleach is NOT registered with the EPA as a disinfectant to kill mold.**

### **Myth #2: It's okay to keep firewood in contact with your home**

Truth: Firewood can be full of insects – most are harmless, but some can be of the wood-boring variety such as termites, carpenter ants, powder post beetles and the emerald ash borer. Therefore we recommend moving firewood piles at least a few feet from your home...or as far as your property allows.

### **Myth #3: Burning candles in your home improves your indoor air quality because it smells better**

Truth: "Candles are fast becoming one of the most common unrecognized causes of poor indoor air quality," says Diane Walsh Astry, Executive Director of the Health House Project, an American Lung Association education project in St. Paul, Minnesota.

- Some candle wicks contain lead. (mainly from non-US made candles)

- Paraffin candles are generally the most problematic. Paraffin is a derivative of petroleum. When burned they release carcinogenic toxins such as benzene, toluene, formaldehyde, acetaldehyde, acrolein and soot into the air. The emissions from paraffin candles contain many of the same toxins produced by burning diesel fuel.
- Recommend burning soy or beeswax candles

**Myth #4: Expensive furnace filters are better furnace filters**

Truth: The cheaper, thinner furnace filters are the best for your HVAC system. Expensive pleated filters (generally advertised as ‘allergy filters’) are thick and coated with chemicals. This forces the furnace motor to work harder to pull air through the filter. Therefore we recommend buying the old fashioned fiberglass disposable filters and changing them once a month.

**Myth #5: Radon may be released from granite/stone countertops**

Truth: Apparently there was an article in a solid surface (i.e. Corian) trade journal that implied that natural stones such as granite may release radon. A local radio person has picked this up and is mentioning the granite/radon connection. According to the radon testing company I work with as well as several internet sources, there is no evidence or scientific data to support claims of unsafe radon levels occurring from stone countertops. We’re likely to hear more about this in the future however.

**Myth #6: If it’s new construction (or a gut rehab), I don’t need an inspection**

Truth: Sadly, municipal inspections and the developer sponsored ‘walk through’ that focuses on cosmetic issues won’t protect buyers from developers who cut corners. Many developers know that buyers won’t hire inspectors so they cut corners until they are forced to properly complete their projects. A good new construction/gut rehab inspection will include all accessible common areas as well as a detailed punch list of the interior space. 100% of the time, we’ll identify more issues during our inspection than the developer’s project manager has on their punch list.

**Myth #7: I’d rather NOT know what’s wrong with my house before I put it on the market**

Truth: Pre-listing inspections are an excellent way to prevent problems once the home is under contract and the buyer brings in their own inspector. If you’ve had an inspection before listing a home you can either state what issues won’t be addressed by the seller or fix the items before they ever become an issue. Pre-listing inspections are especially valuable for sellers of vintage homes or sellers who have lived in a home for many years. Presenting a ‘clean’ inspection report to perspective buyers can also be a great sales tool.