



Senate Bill 655 Mold – Fact Sheet



Promoting Safe and Thriving Communities

Senate Bill 655 amends Sections 17920 and 17920.3 of the Health and Safety Code by adding “mold” as a substandard condition in housing. Under prior law, certain conditions that could lead to mold growth qualified as substandard conditions; however, the mold itself was not. These changes are effective on January 1, 2016.

Mold will be defined in Section 17920 to mean “*microscopic organisms or fungi that can grow in damp condition in the interior of a building*”.

Mold will be a substandard condition when it is “visible mold growth, as determined by a health officer or a code enforcement officer ... excluding the presence of mold that is minor and found on surfaces that can accumulate moisture as part of their properly functioning and intended use”.

As of January 1, 2016 the Department of Environmental Health (DEH) will address mold during routine inspections of apartments and hotels that are required to have a health permit issued by DEH. DEH will also respond to tenant complaints of mold in rental housing in the unincorporated areas of the County and in cities that contract with DEH to operate their housing programs.

Senate Bill 655 also adds section 1941.7 to the state Civil Code, placing conditions on tenant civil remedies related to mold. This provision only applies to civil remedies, and does not affect DEH administration of the State Housing Law program.

If you have any questions, please contact our Duty Information Specialist at 858-505-6900 or email at fh dutyeh@sdcounty.ca.gov.