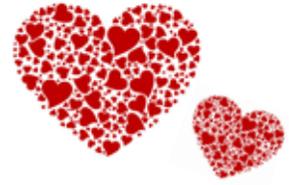


February 2012 Newsletter



*“Must, bid the Morn awake! Sad Winter now declines,
Each bird doth choose a mate; This day’s Saint Valentine’s.
For that good bishop’s sake, Get up and let us see
What beauty it shall be, That Fortune us assigns.”*

~Michael Drayton



Clarify the Confusion



There is only one way to solve the mold concern under your home: Change the things that are proven by facts not opinions. Seek facts that have been proven by time and history.

Fact: Mold can not germinate or reproduce under ultra violet light. Our great grandfathers proved this when they constructed turn of the century homes that had no skirting to cover the crawlspace. From the prairies of Montgomery, to the hills in Huntsville, to the farm land of the lower south, the early homes were and remain mold free.

Fact: Cross ventilation along with ultra violet light are the keys to mold free living. The addition of cross ventilation was used to cool homes without air conditioning. At the invention of the cooling system, contractors began closing up the crawlspaces to improve the appearance of a home resulting in the loss of ultra violet light and ventilation. The missing element is not ventilation but cross ventilation. Cross ventilation is defined as air that moves across or through a structure. If the air that enters the openings in your vent system is so restricted you cannot feel it physically on the other side of the structure you do not have cross ventilation. You have lost the effective use of air flow. The effective use of air flow gives birth to mold through humidity. So when you get the advice to add electric vent systems under your home you may find that it does not follow the old-timers proven rule of success: More air. More light. Better living. If you do not address the real problem, a real solution will not be achieved.

New Orleans Beignets

Step 1: Make the Yeast Mixture

Combine 1/4 oz. envelope of active dry yeast, 1/2 cup warm water and 1 tsp. granulated sugar in bowl of a heavy-duty stand mixer; let stand 5 minutes. Add 1 cup evaporated milk, 2 large eggs (slightly beaten), 1 tsp. of salt, and 1/2 cup granulated sugar.

Step 2: Form the Beignet Dough

Microwave 1 cup water until hot; stir in 1/4 cup of shortening until melted. Add to yeast mixture. Beat at low speed, gradually adding 4 cups flour, until smooth. Gradually add 2 1/2 to 3 cups more flour, beating until a sticky dough forms. Transfer to a lightly greased bowl; turn to grease top. Cover and chill 4 to 24 hours.

Step 3: Roll and Cut the Dough

Turn dough onto a floured surface; roll to 1/4-inch thickness. Cut into 2 1/2-in squares

Step 4: Fry Until Golden Brown

Pour oil to depth of 2 to 3 inches into a Dutch oven; heat to 360°. Fry dough, in batches, 2 to 3 minutes on each side or until golden brown. Drain on a wire rack. Dust immediately with powdered sugar.

Test Kitchen Secret: Keep the freshly fried beignets warm in a 200° oven up to 30 minutes. To make ahead, store the dough in an airtight container in the refrigerator up to one week



Clarify the Confusion (continued)



Fact: Code designed by contractors and engineers will not always work. Code that attempts to control mother nature is only a guide to proper construction. As contractors, mold professionals, and home owners, we sometimes have to improve code on a case by case basis to manage water and humidity. Minimum code only requires 1 vent for every 120 sq/ft of flooring; however, Mother Nature may require 4 times that. The key is to extend every effort to get back to the proven methods of the past: Air that moves and light that sees.

Fact: Crawlspace moisture barriers are required by code; however, the common moisture barrier will not always control the moisture in the soil. Added seals and bonds may be required to be successful in the absence of cross ventilation. In code, the purpose of the required moisture barrier is to overcome the loss of cross ventilation. The seals or bonds are to keep accumulated water under the plastic from consuming specific locations of the structure. Returning us back to the root of the problem: Lack of cross ventilation and ultra violet light.

Summary: In the mold business, it is often said you do not have a mold problem, you have a water problem that has become a mold concern, and you cannot fix your mold problem with out addressing your water concern. They are one in the same. So when dealing with crawlspace mold keep your eyes on the real facts, keep to the old way in all your improvements, adding copious amounts of ultra violet light and cross ventilation.



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