

## MOLD & MILDEW CAUSE AND PREVENTION



### Cause

Mold and Mildew spores are ever-present in air & soil and most will germinate when exposed to Temperatures above 75° F and Relative Humidity (RH) of 50% with rapid spread occurring at 80%; however some can grow in significantly lower temperature and RH levels.

- All fabrics will support growth but natural fibers like cotton, due to their cellulose component, are more susceptible than synthetics. Some synthetics are treated with an anti-microbial agent which adds to their growth resistance. **SurLast® BW+** used for our Mooring Covers has the anti-microbial additive.

Anti-microbial treatments protect the base surface itself so it alone won't support spore growth however organic soiling on top of those surfaces will. Once a population is established on the cover, vinyl seating or gel-coat an irregular stain will appear which ranges in color from gray to black however yellow, orange & red stains are possible. Sometimes UV exposure can fade them but most often they remain permanent stains.



### Treatment – (Difficult & Very Time Consuming with Limited Results)

- Once growth is established vacuuming using a HEPA filter unit would be the 1st step followed by cleaning:
- For Gel-Coat surfaces use 1/2 to 1 cup of chlorine bleach in 1 gallon of water, however check with your Boat manufacturer for their recommendation.
- For Fabric & Vinyl Surfaces Shampoo lightly with an upholstery shampoo, use a rug shampoo for carpets.
- Stained vinyl is many times not correctable. (Some vinyl's may have little or no antimicrobials in the PVC or foam lining which allows the mold growth and staining to occur sooner)



### Focus on Prevention

The key in eliminating mold growth is controlling moisture, Take it away and growth simply will not occur so maintaining a cool and dry condition with clean surfaces is paramount. Using a dehumidifier isn't practical for boat storage however a simple remedy can be using Desiccant bags. They must be monitored as they will absorb moisture and become ineffective but they can be replaced and are a relatively inexpensive method. They are available in packs for a normal size boats called "Boat Dry" purchasable from Sun Solutions [www.sunsolutionproducts.com](http://www.sunsolutionproducts.com)

### In summary – Proper Boat Storage using our Mooring Cover

Our Cover protects your boat from Water & Dirt intrusion and Sun UV damage but neglecting the cleanliness & environmental conditions under the cover will promote Mold & Mildew growth which can permanently stain the fabric & vinyl surfaces.

Once the boat is ready to store the best practices are:

- Clean and dry the boat thoroughly
- Place a "Boat Dry" set of desiccant bags throughout the boat
- Put our **Wrap it Up™** cover on, tightly ratcheted (seal will be created at the rub-rail)
- Block the **VacUHold** Vents to prevent outside air from getting in (Caution do not block when towing)

Drying out a boat is difficult but the extra care you take will keep your boat looking new for a long time.