

Microbial Growths and Leaking Water

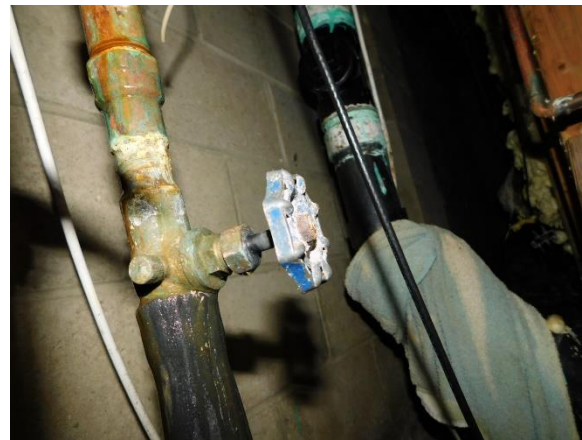
June 28, 2019

This week's find of the week almost jumped out and bit me. There was a black stain on a basement ceiling about 10 inches in diameter and it was quickly identified as a, "Microbial growth". I can't positively identify mold in the field and the home inspection standards of practice specifically exclude looking for or identifying mold (and other toxins or carcinogens for that matter) in the course of a home inspection. But I do tell clients when they ask that I am looking for leaks. The leaks may be from the roof or plumbing and plumbing leaks can come from supply pipes, fixtures and faucets or drain and waste. In this first case, the leak likely comes from a very loose toilet bowl directly above. I had not been in the upper floor as of yet but the real estate agent confirmed that there was a bathroom above and a leak



from one of the fixtures or pipes in that bathroom was a safe prediction. Using a moisture meter it was confirmed that there were high levels of moisture in the drywall. Later in the inspection it was confirmed that the toilet bowl above was very loose. This was reported both in my General Information section of the report (Stating that a "microbial growth" had been found) and in the Bathroom section as well.

While inspecting another area of the basement there was a small hatch. It was opened and behind the finished



basement wall (actually a shower in a bathroom) there was water all over the place! Wet pipes, a wet floor and an old soaking wet towel that had been left inside the wall! This too was appropriately reported.