

Regal Home Inspections, LLC

Find of the Week 8/3/2019

Occasionally wet walls are very obvious, particularly when the wall is drywall. The paper surface of the drywall may bubble, wrinkle or peel. Sometimes, there's a color difference. In the case of this week's find of the week, it was some spotting on the wall of what appeared to be a microbial growth. Please understand, looking for mold is outside of the scope of the NJ home inspection standards of practice as defined by the NJ administrative code. However, as I often tell clients, looking for leaks (which microbial growths need to sustain themselves) is part of the home inspection to the degree possible. A reminder that the NJ home inspection process, by law (Administrative Code) is non destructive.

In this case there were very small specs on the wall just above the molding. Can you see it in this photo?



As you can see in the next few photos using a moisture meter (a required tool for home inspectors as stated in the NJ AC) confirms that there are high levels of moisture in the drywall wall. The source is unknown but the report states,



**“1) Material Defect/Major, Repair/Maintain/Service, Evaluate -**  
*Microbial growths were found at one or more locations in the basement. It is beyond the scope of this inspection to identify what substance or organism this staining is. However such staining is normally caused by excessively moist conditions, which in turn can be caused by plumbing or building envelope leaks and/or substandard ventilation. The moisture meter confirms that the levels of moisture in the drywall (Sheetrock [® Like material]) are excessive. These conducive conditions should be corrected before making any attempts to remove or correct the staining. Normally affected materials such as drywall are removed, enclosed affected spaces are allowed to dry thoroughly, a mildewcide may be applied, and only then is drywall reinstalled. For evaluation and possible mitigation, consult with a qualified industrial hygienist or mold/moisture mitigation specialist. Please note that it's very possible that the extent of the microbial growths is more significant inside the wall and only, "the tip of the iceberg" is showing on the outside.”*