

# SGS MOULD PREVENTION SOLUTIONS FOR THE LEATHER & FOOTWEAR INDUSTRIES

## CHALLENGES IN MOULD PREVENTION

Mould growth is one of the significant issues within the leather and footwear supply chains. Mould growth on products can cause colour change and an unpleasant smell on products and in some cases may lead to irreversible damage to products. The damage may include staining or formation of fat spurs in leather, which is a consequence of mould breaking down fats within the leather.

As a result of mould growth, extra cost, whether tangible or intangible, may be incurred in the supply chain of leather goods and footwear production. This may include the cost of mould treatment, late deliveries, loss of sales revenue, brand's reputation or product recalls. Therefore, prevention of mould spread in the manufacturing site, storage and packing area is crucial within the footwear and leather industries.

## HEALTH & SAFETY CONCERNS ON MOULD

In addition to the unpleasant look on the leather products, certain types of moulds and their associated spores may be considered to be pathogenic or toxic. With mould being ubiquitous in nature, mould spores are a common component in the atmosphere. If mould spores are present in large quantity, they may pose a health risk to people who come into contact with them, especially to those who have immunocompromised health issues, potential allergic reactions and respiratory problems. Some moulds also produce mycotoxins that can pose serious health risks to humans and animals. Exposure to high levels of mycotoxins can lead to neurological problems and in some cases death. Prolonged exposure like daily workplace exposure can be particularly harmful.



## WHAT ARE MOULDS?

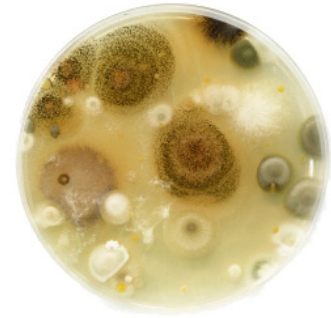
Mould is a fungus that needs a food source and moisture to grow and propagate. They are found everywhere and colonies can grow on almost any substance when moisture is present. Moulds are reproduced by spores, which can be carried by air currents. When these spores land on a moist surface that is suitable for life, they begin to grow.

Leather acts as an ideal food source for colonies of mould to thrive and thus it is important to control every stage of production, storage and shipment.

Many factories and storage sites, particular in Asia, are ideal breeding grounds for moulds due to high temperature and humidity in the region. Other areas of breeding grounds include ocean-going containers where mould growth is common due to the humid condition as well as temperature cycles of hot and cold within the containers and external conditions during shipment. Any inappropriate storage or shipment conditions would facilitate the rapid mould propagation.



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## OUR SOLUTIONS

### MOULD PREVENTION AWARENESS TRAINING

Awareness training is an important first step to implement a mould prevention policy at your manufacturing site, storage and packing area. Our mould prevention awareness training course targets brand's or suppliers' QA and production managers, who oversee product quality and safety compliance and workers' health and safety. The awareness training includes the following areas:

- Understanding the cause of moulds and how they occurs
- Preventative measures for mould
- Investigation of mould and tracing the source of problems
- Preventing product exposure to mould / spores during shipment

With practicality in mind, our training content is designed in a way that complicated scientific and technical information is presented in an easily understandable industrial language and digestible fashion with vivid illustrations.

Through this training course, attendees can gain technical knowledge during the training and hopefully master the fundamentals, enabling them to apply the acquired knowledge and theory in their daily use.

### MOULD PREVENTION RELATED TESTING SERVICES

To provide greater assurance along the supply chain, SGS offers a range of turn-key and individualised testing services to allow brands and retailers to gain greater understanding of mould related issues on products and raw materials. Services include mould growth resistance of different materials and safety compliance of mould prevention chemical agents.

### ON-SITE MOULD PREVENTION ASSESSMENT

Under favourable environmental conditions, during each stage of manufacturing, storage and shipping, there is a potential of mould growth on final products or semi-finished products. Since it is difficult to completely prevent contamination by mould spores and the resulting mould growth, cleanliness and moisture control become important in the storage and the manufacturing facilities to reduce the risk of mould in the manufacturing or storage facilities.

The conditions under which products are manufactured, stored and packed will be investigated during our on-site mould prevention assessment. During the on-site visit, moisture content, humidity and ventilation of the manufacturing site, storage and packing areas will be measured and evaluated. Mould management, general housekeeping and monitoring of packaging materials also will be assessed. Where gaps in the preventative measures have been identified, SGS will provide recommendations for the client to facilitate continuous improvement.

#### SCOPE OF ON-SITE MOULD PREVENTION ASSESSMENT

- Manufacturer's mould prevention policy
- Staff training, awareness and competence
- Humidity control of the site
- Site's general housekeeping
- Production procedure management
- Storage condition of incoming materials & finish products
- Shipping condition of finish products
- Mould prevention chemical agent control

### ABOUT SGS

Headquartered in Switzerland, SGS is the world's leading inspection, verification, testing and certification company. SGS is recognized as the global benchmark for quality and integrity. With more than 80,000 employees, SGS operates a network of over 1,650 offices and laboratories around the world.

SGS Global Softlines has an extensive network of over 40 laboratories worldwide, with a strong team of committed professionals from multi-disciplinary backgrounds. Our internationally accredited state-of-the-art testing laboratories offer a comprehensive range of physical, chemical and functional testing services for components, materials or finished products. We help your company ensure the quality and performance needs and comply with international, industrial and regulatory standards worldwide.

### CONTACT US

To learn more about our services, please visit us at [www.sgs.com/softlines](http://www.sgs.com/softlines) or contact our representatives for more information.

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WHEN YOU NEED TO BE SURE

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