A. Purpose:

1. To prevent microbial amplification from water damage affecting the safety and comfort of area occupants.
2. To minimize property damage, remediation cost, and to enable prompt resumption of routine activities in affected areas.
3. To describe a unified set of procedures for addressing water intrusions.

B. Applicability/Scope:
This policy covers all campuses for a situation where due to water leak, flood, construction activity, or other such event, building materials or furniture become wet to the extent that remediation or removal is necessary.

C. Responsibility

1. Columbia University Facilities
   a. Ensure water leaks are addressed as soon as possible.
   b. Ensure wet or stained carpets and surfaces are either dried completely or removed as outlined in the procedure below.
   c. Inform clients about plan of action and any follow-up

2. EH&S
   a. Investigate mold complaints and coordinate with facilities probable plan of action.

D. Definitions: N/A

E. Procedures:

1. Water Intrusion
   a. The overall approach for dealing with wet building material shall be: “DRY IT OUT OR THROW IT OUT…QUICKLY (within 48 hours)”,
   b. Upon notification or discovery, Facilities will determine the source of the water and if the leak has been stopped. (The first priority is stopping the water flow, if possible.)
   c. Remove and replace any wet ceiling tiles.
   d. Inspect areas above ceilings for water-damaged filters, sheet rock, insulation, etc.
   e. Instruct occupants to inspect books, journals, and other papers and then either discard unsalvageable or unneeded materials, or thoroughly dry items that they wish to keep.
   f. Upholstered materials (chairs, couches) that cannot be cleaned and dried should be discarded.
   g. Carpets should be wet-vacuumed, cleaned and thoroughly dried, using fans whenever feasible; HVAC should be adjusted to maximize fresh air flow whenever possible. If necessary, cabinets, desks, etc. must be moved so that carpeting beneath them may also be wet-vacuumed, cleaned and thoroughly dried. As wet or damp carpets are the most problematic sources of microbial amplification, it is vital that these activities be undertaken as soon as possible.
   h. Water-damaged areas of walls shall be cut out and replaced, if necessary. Otherwise, walls shall be cleaned, dried, and repainted.

2. Mold
The procedures described above should eliminate fungal amplification. However, there will continue to be situations where mold may be ‘discovered’ even in the absence of recalled water intrusion. These discoveries are usually confined to a few specific types of surfaces or areas.

a. Non-porous surfaces
   i. **Bathrooms**, in grout between tiles. Use routine cleaning procedures and stiff-bristled brush if needed.
   ii. **Cold rooms**. Change air filters in room units. Investigators will be instructed to remove any cellulosic materials (cardboard, paper) and to routinely clean non-porous surfaces.

b. Porous materials
   i. **Ceiling tiles**. Replace any tiles showing mold growth or water staining. Before replacing tiles, inspect space above the ceiling for on-going leaks.
   ii. **Walls**. Provided that no more than 10 square feet are affected, clean with any surface-compatible cleaner. Consider that mold on walls may be the result of water reaching the surface from a source inside the wall (above or below); investigate this possibility by inspecting surrounding areas for leaks.

c. If mold growth is extensive, contact EH&S.

F. Emergency Contacts:
   2. CUMC campus: - Facilities Management - 212-305-HELP (4357)
   3. LDEO campus: - Safety Manager (845-365-8822)

G. Medical Surveillance: NA
   Exposure to mold can cause an allergic reaction in some individuals. Those individuals who believe they have been so-affected should be evaluated at the Workforce Health and Safety (WHS) Clinic.

H. Recordkeeping:
   1. Records of investigations conducted by the EH&S staff will be maintained by EH&S office
   2. Records of actions taken by Facilities will be maintained by respective Facilities offices.

I. Forms: NA

J. References

K. Acknowledgements: NA