Mold Information Sheet

Recognizing signs of infestation:
Mold found on library materials can appear as the following: dark or light spots, rounded fuzzy areas, spidery-shaped or thread-like growths. Actively growing mold is damp or smeary. Mold that is inactive is dry and powdery. Warning: mold can cause adverse health reactions.

When and Where to Look:
Mold grows in high humidity conditions, such as after a flood or water spill. New acquisitions and materials affected by a water emergency must be inspected for mold particularly the covers and spine areas if books.

What to Do:
Staff who find mold on library materials should immediately notify their supervisor. All materials with mold are potential health hazards and should be handled only with proper protective equipment including gloves and a N95 respirator. (In Bobst Library the Preservation Department will provide this equipment.) While wearing gloves seal infested library material in a plastic bag. Clean areas where the moldy materials were stored with a solution of 70% water and 30% isopropanol and/or use a HEPA vacuum.

Disinfecting Contaminated Library Materials:
To disinfect a moldy book place the book in an isolated and well ventilated space. Once dry the mold can be removed using a HEPA vacuum. Contaminated library items will be prone to repeat outbreak; therefore it is preferable to discard and replace moldy library materials or bindings. The Preservation Department will coordinate treatment at Bobst Library and can provide advice to portal, institute, and departmental library staff.