** FACT SHEET **

INDOOR DAMPNESS

- The Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have concluded that indoor dampness can cause asthma development, asthma exacerbation, hypersensitivity pneumonitis, allergic fungal sinusitis, allergic rhinitis, and chronic rhinosinusitis.
- An epidemiologic review reported indoor dampness can cause bronchitis and eczema, in addition to the symptoms/illnesses reported by the IOM and WHO.
- The IOM concluded that "excessive damp indoor environments constitute a public health problem."
- The WHO concluded that "The most important means for avoiding adverse health effects is the prevention of persistent dampness and microbial growth on interior surfaces and in building structures."
- One in every three NIOSH health hazard evaluation investigations is related to dampness or mold.
- In 1995, the Government Accounting Office reported that about 30% of schools in the U.S. needed repairs to plumbing, roofs, or external walls, windows, and doors.
- In 2009, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistic reported there are approximately 7.2 million school teachers.
- A 2010 analysis of data on U.S. working adults indicated that 13.1% of teachers had current asthma (McHugh et al. 2010).
- NIOSH published an Alert entitled *Preventing Occupational Respiratory Disease from Exposures Caused by Dampness in Office Buildings, Schools, and Other Nonindustrial Buildings.* The Alert was written in response to an overwhelming number of HHE requests involving indoor environmental quality problems resulting from water incursion and mold and the increased occurrence of major weather events of hurricanes and flooding.