



Mold remediation contractors use this propane heater in conjunction with air blowers to inject superheated air into moldy homes. Company official tout this as an effective chemical-free way of ridding a home of mold infestation.

## Company touts 'pasteurizing' homes

### Heat used to rid buildings of mold, insect infestations

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NEW ORLEANS — A California company is touting a new method of eradicating mold as a practical solution to help the Gulf South rebuild.

Two companies doing rebuild work in Louisiana are using the process, called ThermaPureHeat. E-Therm, the Ventura, California based company that developed the technique, says the process is akin to "pasteurizing" a building.

ThermaPureHeat uses superheated air to dry out a building while eliminating potentially harmful mold without the use of toxic and damaging chemicals, said David Hedman, E-Therm president and CEO.

The ThermaPureHeat process essentially elevates temperatures in mold-damaged buildings to the point where mold and other microorganism can no longer survive.

Hedman said most molds die between 140 – 150 degrees Fahrenheit. Potentially harmful bacteria dies at lower temperatures than that, so

the ThermaPureHeat method removes bacteria as well.

Hedman also emphasized the ability of heat to reach small cavities and other areas that might be difficult to reach with biocides and other chemical methods of mold remediation.

C & E Services Inc., based out in Phoenix, Arizona and PDG Environmental, based in Pittsburgh, are both using the remediation method in New Orleans now.

C & E is working with companies in the New Orleans Central Business District and eastern New Orleans, said company spokesman Carlo Chatman. PDG has remediation jobs in the French Quarter.

One aspect of ThermaPureHeat that is attractive, Hedman said, is the ability of the pasteurization process to replace chemical methods of remediation.

"Why do we want to exacerbate the pollution problem? Why should we use a chemical solution when there is a non-chemical solution?" Hedman said.

In addition to the absence of chemicals, Hedman feels a major benefit of his methods is that it allows

**“ Why should we use a chemical solution when there is a non-chemical solution? ”**

**— David Hedman  
E-Therm CEO**

a structure to remain intact with minimal demolition needed.

In other words, a building with a mold problem will not need to have large portions of the structure torn out and replaced, which will save time and money in the long run. The buildings can also receive the heat treatment without receiving structural damage. Companies that have used the ThermaPureHeat process include Fidelity Investment, United Campus Housing and Citizens Insurance.

Hedman stresses that the process should be used only when overseen by a professional Industrial Hygienist.

To perform the process, an environmental engineer independent of a contractor would write the specifications for the project that a mold-abatement contractor would then carry out.

"Our technology can be overseen by engineers independent of the contractors so it can be used safely," said Hedman.

In Louisiana, mold remediation is regulated by the State Contractor Licensing Board.

Using heat is still a new technology and is relatively unknown in Louisiana.

"This is the first I heard of it," said Chuck Marceau, Executive Director of the Contractor Licensing Board. However, Marceau noted that any contractor who uses the pasteurization technology is free to be licensed, as long as that contractor gets 24 hours of mold assessment and remediation training and takes a four-hour course on the Consumer Protection Act and unfair trade practices.

The ThermaPureHeat method has been under development for the past five years and has received a gradual roll-out across the country over the past two years.

The genesis of the project came when Hedman was working at Stanford University. While at Stanford, Hedman encountered a professor at UCLA who was doing a study on killing insects with heat instead of pesticides. Hedman then got the idea to use this treatment as a means of killing mold and bacteria.

This process has been used with success in its native California, with 50 structures in Yosemite National Park, as well

as the state capital in Sacramento receiving the ThermaPureHeat treatment. In both cases, roof leaks had caused mold problems.

In addition to the mold problems, the operators in both locations had insect problems, which is another benefit of the pasteurization (heat kills insects).

The process roughly takes 1 – 2 days for a 2,000 square foot home. In most cases, the cost is \$1–2 per square foot.

What excites Hedman most about the new methods is the positive environmental effects of not using chemicals to eliminate mold.

"I am euphoric on replacing the toxic chemicals,"