

## Simple & Initial check for Decontamination

The initial assessment of a project's readiness for detailed analysis by an Indoor Environmental Professional (IEP) hinge on practical, cost-effective methods that can reveal significant insights into the quality of a contractor's work and the thoroughness of their cleaning efforts. Here's a step-by-step approach based on the principles outlined, emphasizing visual and olfactory inspections, as well as adherence to standards like those mentioned in BSI 12999:

### 1. Visual Inspection

- **Debris, Dust, and Dirt:** A comprehensive walkthrough of the site should be conducted to identify visible signs of debris, dust, and dirt. The presence of these elements is a straightforward indicator of the cleaning and workmanship quality. A clean site is expected to be largely free of such residues, particularly in areas that have been claimed as cleaned and ready for inspection.
- **White Glove Test (BSI 12999):** This method, recommended by British Standards in BSI 12999, involves running a white glove over surfaces to collect dust and dirt not immediately visible to the naked eye. The test is inspired by practices in the asbestos industry for preliminary assessments and serves as a low-tech but effective method to gauge surface cleanliness.

### 2. Olfactory Inspection

- **Detection of Odours:** The presence of unusual or strong odours can indicate incomplete cleaning or the presence of microbial growth. Contractors should be aware that any significant odour is a potential sign of failure, necessitating further investigation and remediation.

### 3. Contractor Competence and Awareness

- Contractors should be knowledgeable about the implications of visible debris and odours. A lack of awareness or disregard for these signs is a red flag, indicating potential failures in more detailed testing and analysis phases.
- The expectation is not only for the removal of visible debris but also for the assurance that finer, potentially hazardous particles (like those from mold, mildew, or asbestos) have been adequately addressed.

### 4. Decontamination and Fine Particle Cleaning

- Effective decontamination goes beyond mere surface cleaning; it involves the thorough removal of fine particles that can pose health risks. Contractors skilled in decontamination processes are expected to employ methods that ensure both visible and microscopic contaminants are eradicated.

## **5. Preliminary Assessments Prior to Expert Evaluation**

- Before engaging an IEP for extensive sampling and analysis, these initial checks serve as a practical filter to assess the basic cleanliness and readiness of a site. Failing these preliminary assessments is a strong indicator that more comprehensive cleaning and possibly more in-depth remediation efforts are required.

## **Conclusion**

Initial assessments based on visual and olfactory markers provide a cost-effective way to evaluate a contractor's work quality and the effectiveness of cleaning efforts. These methods, while simple, are grounded in established standards and practices, such as those from the asbestos industry and recommended by BSI 12999. They serve as crucial preliminary steps before committing to the more significant expense of detailed analysis by qualified IEPs. Contractors failing to pass these initial tests are likely to face challenges in subsequent detailed evaluations, underscoring the importance of thorough cleaning and decontamination practices.