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To whom this may concern:

In reference to the fungus/mold found on your wood fiber surface;

Nuisance molds are a natural occurrence and are not uncommon in Woodcarpet[®] engineered wood fiber and decorative wood mulch products in general. As wood decomposes, fungus naturally occurs in the form of microscopic elements and fungi may develop visible reproductive structures that are commonly called "slime molds".

These mold spores are air-borne, so a surefire solution to prevent visible fungus structures from forming is nearly impossible since these spores can come from nearby surroundings.

Nuisance molds are most often found to occur following wet weather in temperatures above 35 degrees F. When the wood is wet, bacteria rapidly colonize and the fungi feed on these bacteria which may lead to slime molds, mushrooms, etc. Once the wood dries out, the slime molds gradually go away as the bacteria, the fungus is feeding on, begins to diminish. If the area has good drainage and receives direct sunlight, the surface will normally dry out before fungus becomes visible. Heavy rain or extended periods of rain along with mild weather are prime conditions for fungus to grow.

There is no known health hazards associated with these fungi unless they are eaten, but it is a good idea to remove them especially in areas where children have access. Short term solutions are to scoop out and dispose of the fungus. **(Do not rake infected areas as this will spread the mold spores and increase mold issue)** Then apply a mixture of one part heavy duty liquid laundry detergent to three parts water mixed in a pump sprayer and apply to the entire surface to kill the bacteria the fungus is feeding on. If the fungus persists, granulated lime pellets can be spread over the area then lightly rake into the surface. 2-3 applications of either remedy along with dry weather may be necessary depending on the severity of the problem.

There are ways to help minimize mold problems. For example, installing an adequate drainage system and locating the area so that the surface will receive direct sunlight is a good start. Even if the area has an excellent drain system, if the surface remains shaded, it may never really dry out which will lead to faster decomposition and frequent mold or fungus problems.

Since climates vary from region to region and year to year, and playground usage varies, Zeager recommends the playground owner add periodic applications of the detergent mixture or lime application to their routine maintenance to the play surface. Attached is Zeager's recommended maintenance procedures for Woodcarpet[®] engineered wood fiber for playgrounds.

Sincerely,

Research and Development

Zeager Bros. Inc.