

*The following are strategies that you can employ to reduce the potential for mold growth in crawl spaces during the construction process. The strategies should be combined to make a protocol that works with your construction schedule, staff and budget. Advanced Energy recommends following as many strategies as necessary to keep the crawl space dry and prevent mold growth.*

- 1 Monitor**

The ultimate goal is to not allow the wood moisture content to get above 20%. Test the wood by using a wood moisture meter with metal pins that you stick into the wood. You can purchase a relatively inexpensive wood moisture meter at hardware stores for about \$30.
- 2 Protect Building Materials from Weather**

Cover your wood on site, and monitor the moisture content before installing in a minimally-ventilated space (e.g., I-joists and band in crawl spaces).
- 3 Ventilate the Crawl Space**

Increase the ventilation in the crawl space until wood moisture is stabilized below 15%, and ground is not soggy. You can increase ventilation by:

  - Building the foundation wall with vents that can remain open until the crawl space is dry and construction is nearly done. At that point, you can use blue board or Thermax to cover the vents and air seal with spray foam.
  - Build the foundation wall with two openings for crawl space doors, such that cross ventilation can occur. You can put a box fan in one doorway, facing out, to draw air through the crawl space.
- 4 Grade Away from the Building Early in Construction**

Ensure that initial grading of the site allows for the crawl space to be higher than the exterior grade. Grade inside the crawl space should slope to a low spot with a drain to daylight. Grading can help to dry out the ground inside the crawl space.
- 5 Install Temporary Poly During Construction**

Cover the ground with poly after the subfloor is on to reduce moisture load in the crawl space. If the ground is very wet, ventilate adequately to dry it out or close the openings and use a standalone dehumidifier to get rid of excess moisture. You may want to use a cheap poly during construction and replace it with the final closed crawl space liner at the end.
- 6 Actively Dehumidify if Necessary**

Use ventilation or a dehumidifier to manage moisture in the crawl space until the power is on and the permanent drying mechanism is functional. When using a dehumidifier, keep crawl space door closed and vents (if present) covered.