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Experts: Condensation and rain are responsible for mold on the wooden walls of the NTU Earth Room

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The "Earth Room" of Nanyang Technological University. (Photo: Nanyang Technological University official website)

Mould has grown on the walls of the wooden building of Nanyang Technological University's "Gaia" building. Experts pointed out that this is caused by condensation and rainwater and has nothing to do with the wood.

NTU said in a statement that two independent experts from the National University of Singapore's School of Design and Engineering made the judgment after inspecting the building this week.

Among them, indoor air quality expert Associate Professor Tan Guowei pointed out that the Mass Engineered Timber used in the building would not cause mold growth

because the wood met certified regulatory standards and used protective sealants. Associate Professor Shinya Okuda, an award-winning architect who specializes building with wood, agrees, noting that the Earth Room's exterior timber cladding developed mould from direct exposure to rain, but sanding tests showed the mould had not penetrated the timber structure.

NTU said it accepted and would implement the repair suggestions made by Associate Professor Tan Guowei. The university said that in the next three weeks, all rooms and spaces in the Earth Room affected by mold will be chemically cleaned.

To reduce the chance of mold regrowth, air conditioning grilles that are prone to condensation will be wiped down daily. Less ventilated spaces and corners will be cleaned once a month. Building exterior and interior surfaces, including structural supports, will be regularly inspected, cleaned and maintained. Any visible cracks in the wood surface will also be repaired and resealed to prevent moisture penetration.

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