In this issue you will find a wealth of information concerning the evolving issue of mold and how it affects the wall and ceiling contractor. Let’s examine the issue.

Some see mold as a bane to our industry since wall and ceiling contractors often get blamed for mold growing on our work—usually the owner or GC instructing us to install the gypsum board before the building has been dried-in or because the gypsum has been subjected to some other source of moisture. Fingers are pointed, suits are filed, and countless dollars are wasted in an effort to find the guilty culprit who introduced “toxic mold” into such a pristine setting as a construction project.

Some see mold as a possible boom to our industry. Contractors are using their existing companies or are forming new corporations to do mold remediation. This can be a lucrative business if the contractors are careful and meticulous in their operations in the same way asbestos contractors have been in the past.

Others still see mold as another “boondoggle” in which the public is panicked by an issue that may or may not have any scientific credence or public health issue whatsoever. The personal injury or tort lawyers have found another “cash cow” since asbestos, EIFS, and even smoking seem to have quieted lately. Jury awards in Texas for mold cases alone have become so ludicrous that many insurance companies are beginning to stop writing homeowners’ coverage. From all of the research that I have read, there is no scientific or medical research that concludes that mold is harmful or dangerous to anyone except those with a severe allergy to mold. The Foundation of the Wall and Ceiling Industry has an excellent document on this topic that is available in printed form or as a download from www.awci.org. The government, to date, has issued no personal exposure limits for mold of any kind. Yet, there are countless “experts” with little or no training or credentials, charging in some cases more than the net worth of a home for mold remediation.

Again, our industry seems poised at the crossroads of controversy. Year after year and controversy after controversy, the wall and ceiling industry seems to be in the crosshairs of some new budding disaster. AWCI is in the forefront of these issues and working hard for the industry. That is one of the primary reasons trade organizations as ours even exist. It also answers one of the basic questions as to why join and participate in AWCI. We must band together and speak in a single voice to be heard. Investigate this important topic, draw your conclusions and speak with your voice joining others in our industry to affect an issue that could either increase your business or destroy it.