

Indoor Environmental Quality



What is indoor environmental quality (IEQ)?

The quality of the air and environment inside buildings - homes, schools, workplaces - that contribute to a healthy and comfortable place to live and work. The air can be influenced by chemical, biological, and physical agents that may come from occupant activities, building materials or may be naturally occurring.

Why is IEQ important?

- Inside air can be many times more polluted than the outside air.
- People spend 90% of their time inside.
- Can impact health - asthma and other respiratory diseases, eye and nose irritations, headaches, dizziness, fatigue.

Why now?

- Tighter building construction and reduced levels of outside air brought inside for energy conservation.
- New building materials—glues, particle board
- New construction techniques
- Increased awareness

What are some things that can affect the quality of the indoor environment?

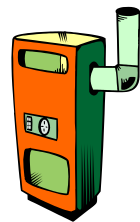
- ♦ Temperature
- ♦ Dust/dirt
- ♦ Mold
- ♦ Moisture
- ♦ Ventilation
- ♦ Allergens:
 - pollen
- ♦ Insects, rodents
- ♦ Carbon monoxide (CO)
- ♦ Bacteria/viruses
- ♦ Chemicals:
 - mercury
 - formaldehyde
 - household cleaners

What are some indicators of indoor environment problems?

- Noticeable odors
- Visible water damage
- Excessive humidity
- Visible mold & mildew
- ♦ Damaged flue pipes or chimney
- ♦ Feel better when outside of home
- ♦ Dirty/faulty heating or air conditioning equipment
- ♦ Stale or stuffy air

What can I do to improve my indoor environment?

- Use “green” cleaning products.
- Install a carbon monoxide detector.
- Change furnace filters regularly; have furnace serviced annually.
- Use exhaust fans in bathroom and kitchen.
- Buy furniture, carpets, paints that are low odor emitting.
- Fix all water leaks promptly.
- Vacuum using a HEPA filter; dust frequently.
- Keep all food and garbage in covered containers.
- Store products such as paints, gasoline, motor oil, and pesticides in air tight cabinets, an outside shed, or an unattached garage.
- Discard old/unused chemicals & pesticides at [Household Hazardous Waste Collections](#).
- Air out dry cleaned clothes before bringing inside.



Where do I get more information?

- Connecticut Department of Public Health
Environmental and Occupational Health Assessment Program
860-509-7740
www.ct.gov/dph/ieq
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
www.epa.gov/iaq
- National Center for Healthy Housing
www.centerforhealthyhousing.org
- U.S. Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA)
www.osha.gov/SLTC/indoorairquality/index.html
- Healthy Schools Network, Inc.
<http://www.healthyschools.org>