



INDOOR AIR QUALITY

RECOMMENDED PROTOCOL FOR RESPONDING TO ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Guidelines:

Respond promptly to concerns and demonstrate that you take their concerns seriously: Think of your employees as customers and show them that their concerns matter because you value their health. *Ex: IAQ team follows up within 24 hours of receiving an IAQ issue report by talking with the complainant and describing next steps. They also discuss work in progress. A culture of customer service will build trust and created a joint sense of facility ownership.*

Engage employees in your work to generate trust and support: Tell complainants what you plan to do in response to their concerns, share any data you have with them and inform employees when and how concerns are resolved. *Ex: IAQ Committee lets people know how to report IAQ issues and ensures swift follow-up. "We educated the teachers about what types of health or comfort issues may be IAQ-related ... if there is a health complaint, we immediately get into the school building and monitor temperature, humidity, CO and CO2.*

Educate staff on IAQ risks, signs of problems and how to report what they find: Give employees knowledge of common IAQ risks and the power to act to protect their indoor environments. Turn them into IAQ guardians and champions. Include leadership and stewardship messages in your education programs. Convey that facility health is a joint responsibility and that it takes a team of proactive employees, staff and managers to prevent problems and deliver outstanding learning environments.

Employee Education for maintaining high Indoor Air Quality:

Do not block air vents or grills. Keep supply vents or return air grilles open and accessible. This keeps the HVAC system from becoming unbalanced or affecting the ventilation of a neighboring office.

Clean up all water spills promptly, water and maintain office plants properly and report water leaks right away. Water creates a hospitable environment for the growth of micro-organisms such as molds or fungi.

Dispose of garbage promptly and properly. Dispose of garbage in appropriate containers that are emptied daily to prevent odors and biological contamination.

Store food properly. Food attracts pests. Some foods, if left unrefrigerated, can spoil and generate unpleasant odors. Never store perishable food products in your desk or on shelves.



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Protocol Steps:

- **TRIGGER:** Report received from employee:
- **STEP 1:** Visual inspection of the area performed by IAQ Team:
 - If NO contaminant source is found, continue at Step 2
 - If contaminant source is found – skip to Step 4.
- **STEP 2:** Deep clean the area:
 - Hepa filter vacuum all porous surfaces
 - Wet wipe clean all non-porous surfaces
 - Wait for any changes in symptoms:
 - If symptoms resolve, response complete.
 - Re-educate employee(s) on the methods for preventing IAQ problems
 - If symptoms persist, continue Step 3
- **STEP 3:** HVAC – Inspect, Adjust, Clean and Replace Filters
 - If contaminant source is found – skip to step 4.
 - If No contaminant source if found:
 - Inspect, adjust and clean vents and ducts
 - Replace filters
 - Wait for any changes in symptoms.
 - If symptoms resolve, response complete
 - Re-educate employee(s) on the methods for preventing IAQ problems
 - If symptoms persist, continue Step 4
- **STEP 4:** IAQ and Bulk Sample Testing by Industrial Hygienist
 - Seal off affected area
 - Bulk sample test
 - Employee relocation if necessary
 - Remediation of contaminants
 - If NO contaminants are found, response is complete
 - If contaminants are found repeat Steps 2 & 3
 - Re-educate employee(s) on the methods for preventing IAQ problems



INDOOR AIR QUALITY RECOMMENDED PROTOCOL FOR RESPONDING TO ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

