



You Too Can Help Improve Your School's Air Quality!

A few simple practices conducted by school building occupants can dramatically improve your indoor air quality and thermal comfort. Please be an active participant and assist with good indoor air quality stewardship in your school!

#1. Keep Dust to a Minimum!

One major contributor to poor indoor air quality is dust. Dust is a mixture of fine-particles along with allergenic substances, pollutants, bacteria/viruses, skin cells and hair that can cling onto or absorb into the dust particles. The average person breathes 500 cubic feet of air everyday. Now, take into consideration that there is over 30 million dust and pollutant particles in one cubic foot of air.

Skin cells attract dust mites who by their very existence can trigger asthma or allergic reactions from both their droppings and decaying bodies. Dust mites are common in humid climates and cannot survive in humidity below 50%. In addition, dust provides food for mold growth. Due to dust and dirt, mold can appear to be growing on synthetic materials such as carpet and furniture fabric that mold cannot consume. For more information about mold, please refer to Florida's Department of Health's publication "Indoor Mold and Health" at: <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/community/indoor-air/mold.htm>

To create a dust-free classroom, it is necessary to reduce the number of surfaces where dust can accumulate. Dust-collecting items should be stored in plastic containers until needed in the classroom. Good housekeeping is essential for dust-sensitive children therefore; counters, sinks, tables, and floors should be clean and clear of clutter.

#2. No Eating in Classrooms! (Except for Pre- Kindergarten and Kindergarten)

To minimize, eliminate or prevent exposure to cockroaches, insects and rodents, and their waste products, you must eliminate their food source. Up to 60% of city-dwelling asthmatics are sensitive to cockroach allergens while those who are allergic to dust are also allergic to cockroaches and their by-products. Cockroaches are known to harbor a variety of disease transmitting pathogens such as Salmonella, Staphylococcus, Streptococcus, hepatitis viruses and coliform bacteria.

#3. Keep Windows and Doors Shut!

Unconditioned air brought directly into the building from the outside contains a large amount of water in the air. In order to reduce the potential for mold, the least amount of water-laden air allowed to enter the building can hinder mold growth.

#4. Report Water Leaks!

Immediately report any indications of water leaks under sink areas, on ceiling tile, or condensation in your classrooms as well as the presence of damp or musty smells. The cabinets found under hand-washing sinks are notoriously jam-packed to capacity, sometimes impeding the proper use of the plumbing. One solution to this problem would be to screw shut the cabinet doors if the cabinets are not reasonably organized and clean.

#5. Set Cabinets Away from Wall!

Allow a minimum air space of 3/8" space from cabinet to wall to provide for adequate air circulation behind the cabinet to inhibit mold growth. Warm air contains more moisture than cold air. Condensation is formed when warm moist air comes in contact with a cold surface. To avoid condensation forming on cold surfaces such as exterior walls, windows and door frames--keep good air circulation throughout the space and avoid temperature fluctuations. Please keep your classroom clean, dry, and well-ventilated.

#6. Do Not Bring Pesticides to School!

Under the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Statute 482.165, it is unlawful to perform pest control without a license for General Use and Restricted Use Pesticides. Quarterly, all current Commercial Pest Control Licensees receive a copy of the, "Registry of Persons Requiring Prior Notification of the Application of Pesticides" in order to protect a person's health. Under Florida Statutes 482.2267, registered persons are required to be notified at least 24 hours before pesticide application to contiguous or adjacent property or, for some overtly pesticide-sensitive people, within one-half mile radius of pesticide application.

#7. Disclose Large Assembly of People!

Contact your Maintenance Department to disclose a large gathering of people, so maintenance personnel can accommodate for the increased heat and elevated carbon dioxide levels that can make auditoriums uncomfortable.

#8. Remove Carpet Where Possible!

Improperly maintained carpet harbors allergens. If you do not remove the carpet, keep your carpet clean, dry, and well-maintained.

#9. Disclose Planned Move of the Computer Room!

If computer rooms are to be moved to another location, please disclose this move to the Maintenance Department so they can accommodate for the increased electrical and ventilation needs.

#10. Maintain Appropriate Population for School Building Design!

School buildings are designed for a certain number of occupants. If this population is exceeded, expect poor indoor air quality. School ventilation needs are gauged in cubic feet per minute per occupant.

Historically, the most common time for indoor air quality discomfort is in the spring time. Due to dryer conditions experienced in February, March, and April, there is a spike in the air quality complaints from dry and irritated mucous membranes of the eyes, nose, and throat.