

Commercial Buildings:

There is a growing population of people affected negatively by toxic indoor air conditions caused by chemicals, fragrances, and gases – and some who can experience serious health problems as a result. This condition is known as Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS). People with MCS experience a range of serious physical reactions - some even life-threatening - to a variety of air pollutants such as perfumes, scented personal care products (deodorants, scented lotions, etc.), chemicals used in cleaning products, deodorizers, pesticides, gas-out from wall and floor coverings, and VOCs (volatile organic compounds) in other building materials.

There are also a growing number of persons with severe allergic reactions to natural contaminants like peanut dust in the air, and are at risk of severe allergic (anaphylactic) reactions. Improving Indoor Air Quality in public areas is of concern to every employer, building owner, and facility manager. This condition may be on the rise because reactions are reported and better monitored or because combinations of man-made materials may interact indoors in ways not predicted by the manufacturer.

The Governor's Council on Disability supports accommodating all persons with disabilities including those with MCS and airborne allergies. The Council asks cooperation from all public access entities to adopt policies and procedures to provide safe indoor air quality for all employees and the public. Staff and visitors who have MCS and/or airborne allergies are encouraged to inform staff and/or managers of their sensitivities to determine various accommodations and develop options in the event that exposure to chemicals and/or airborne allergens is otherwise unavoidable.

Addendum to GCD Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Policy

Residential Addendum:

Most of our exposure to environmental pollutants comes from indoor air. These pollutants come from man-made activities, products and materials we use every day. The air in most of our homes can be 4, 5, or even 100 times more polluted than outdoor air, causing chronic and disabling health problems. Indoor air quality is a significant concern – it's one of the US/EPA's top 5 health risks - because Americans can spend over 90% of their time indoors. 75% of Americans live with someone who suffers from asthma, allergies, or other respiratory illnesses, per the EPA (<http://wxplushealth.org/>).

Indoor air pollution can range from pests and pesticides, chemicals, asbestos, 2nd hand smoke, radon, dust and dust mites, formaldehyde, CO (carbon monoxide), lead and mold. Moisture, mites and VOCs (volatile organic compounds) can combine with particulates to dramatically compromise indoor air quality and lead directly to negative health effects. Results can range from frequent flues and illness, memory loss, learning disabilities, allergies, asthma, lung cancer and other chronic or disabling health conditions.

The Solution is to keep pollutants out and keep the air clean.

The US/EPA names “source-control” as the best strategy to reduce indoor air pollution and improve respiratory health. Source-control can include screening products that have been certified for low chemical emissions. Having a professional Healthy Homes Survey may help identify the risks and then identify remedies, such as adequate exhaust and make-up air, improved cleaning, filtration, and moisture control.

Source control includes seven characteristics: keep it dry and clean, keep it contaminant and pest free, keep it well ventilated, maintained and safe.

The American Lung Association recommends that the first line of defense against indoor air pollution is finding ways to keep the pollutants from being added to the air in the first place.

The Center for Disease Control recommends “dilution of the pollution” with adequate mechanical ventilation.