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Air Quality We Breathe At Home Or In The Workplace

By Peter McGarry

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by: **Peter McGarry**

How would you rate the quality of air in your workplace? More importantly what factors are you considering when rating it?

Your home or work environment may be causing you additional health risks without you realizing it. On average, Canadians spend about 80–90 percent of their time indoors, thus the quality of indoor air is very important. Ask yourself a few questions:

Does fresh, outside air flow into the room or office you are usually in?

Is the room humid?

Are there any gas-fired appliances?

Is your furniture composed of particle board or wood laminents?

These questions need to be addressed when determining the quality of air in our home or workplace. Here are the reasons why.

Does fresh, outside air flow into the room or office you are usually in? Better insulation can save on heating costs, but it limits the amount of fresh air that enters and leaves your house or office. As a lot of water vapour is produced from normal human activities, fresh air is necessary to get rid of this extra humidity.

Is the room humid?

Humid or damp conditions in your home can encourage the growth of mould and dust mites. Mould can develop from too much humidity, building leaks, refrigerator drip pans, bathroom surfaces and flooding.

Mouldy smells from carpet, wood and gypsum board are a sign that they harbour fungi. Stale water in humidifiers and air conditioners can lead to the growth of bacteria and fungi.

Are there any gas-fired appliances?

Typically, oven and pilot light emissions are not vented and can contribute significantly to indoor levels of carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides and formaldehyde. Of emerging interest as a potential source of indoor air pollution is the wood burning stove. Since combustion is much less complete with wood than with oil and gas furnaces, pollution emissions can be greater. Though by-products should be vented to the outside, leaks and improper operation of these appliances can cause emissions to the indoors. Kerosene heaters are becoming increasingly popular for space heating. Since these systems are often unvented, the potential for high level contamination exists.

Is your furniture composed of particle board or laminated wood?

Formaldehyde is released from laminated wood and particleboard in which formaldehyde-containing resins have been used. Urea formaldehyde foam insulation is a significant source of formaldehyde and possibly other gaseous products. Insulating materials such as fibreglass can release particulate matter to indoor air.

Health Risks

Illnesses caused by poor air quality range from skin irritation to sneezing and asthma. In some cases, toxins from fungi can cause illness. Toxins in dust can produce fever and flu-like symptoms, especially if the environment is damp. Viruses can also be found in indoor air, but they do not usually lead to illness. A virus does not survive long in air, and getting sick usually results from contact with infected people.

Peter McGarry

For additional free information on health issues regarding air, water, fitness, nutrition and sleep, please visit www.magneticrevolution.com. This site is a guide to improving your quality of life.

I take an active role in my health and well-being. I created a site

, for

others to read articles about everyday issues on air and water quality, sleep, nutrition and fitness with the intention to create awareness for improving our quality of life.

Do You Need To Consider Air Cleaners?

By Sarah Veda

Air Quality We Breathe At Home Or In The Workplace

In today's industrialized environment, it is important to create an environment where we can breathe clean air. Once, the only way to do so was to go for a trip into the country or to the seaside, however, technology now makes it possible to get clean air at home. Air cleaning systems are available for both residential and industrial purposes.

The quality of the air we breathe plays an important role in our health. Dirty air equals dirty lungs, which can lead to many respiratory problems. Air quality also affects our skin, so it is therefore important that we strive to live in as clean an environment as possible. However, there is still debate as to whether or not air cleaners provide the added health benefits we are led to believe based on advertisements. However, one school of thought is that an air cleaner is necessary where someone has a respiratory illness such as asthma, or allergies resulting from pet dander or dust mites.

It has been proven that some types of air cleaners are effective at removing some particles from the air that can cause eye and lung irritations. The effectiveness of any air cleaner depends on two main factors, the size of particles removed and how much air it can manage to clean in a specified timeframe.

The true test of whether or not you need an air cleaner is the effect the air in your home has on your well being. If your aim is to provide a smoke-free environment in a setting where others smoke cigarettes or cigars then an air cleaner is needed. The harmful effects of second-hand smoke are well documented.

There is no harm in erring on the side of caution and getting an air cleaner, since it has been proven that they do remove some unpleasant and harmful elements from the air we breathe.

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