

Background Information

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) concerns in a school can be subtle and do not always produce easily recognized impacts on health, well-being, or the physical plant. Indoor Air Quality is a concern to all building occupants, and many things contribute to poor Indoor Air Quality.

Most Indoor Air Quality complaints are due to:

1. **Deferred maintenance of the building.** Leaking windows, doors and roofs allow water intrusion into the building and contribute to mold growth.
2. **Improperly operated or maintained Heating Ventilating & Air Conditioning (HVAC) equipment.** Rooms that are cooled below 72 degrees can cause condensation and humidity problems which contribute to mold growth.
3. **Improper or inadequate cleaning of the room or school.** Inadequate ventilation and excessive dust can cause itchy eyes, runny nose, and headaches.
4. **Building occupants and their daily activities.** Leaving doors and windows open allows unfiltered untreated air into the building which contributes to mold growth.
5. **Lastly Microbial Growth** (*mold growth*).

Previous assessments conducted in our schools have shown many IAQ concerns raised by occupants can be easily resolved by site based staff without Environmental Health & Safety, Physical Plant Operations or Facilities & Construction involvement.

In an effort to efficiently allocate resources, locations should ensure the issues identified below have been addressed prior to requesting an IAQ Assessment from Environmental Health & Safety.

Response Procedure

The following steps should be taken when someone at your facility has a complaint about Indoor Air Quality.

- Check the complaint area for visible water damage or staining. If the complaint area has stained ceiling tiles, replace the stained ceiling tiles and initiate a work order to correct the source of the water intrusion. If there is visible water damage to walls, ceilings, or other surfaces (stains or blistered / peeling paint), initiate a work order to correct the water intrusion issues, and to replace water damaged or stained material.
- Check the complaint area for visible dust / dirt / debris on surfaces. Make sure flooring in complaint areas are thoroughly cleaned and free of dust and debris. Remove any build-up of dust within a complaint area, clean and sanitize all environmental surfaces utilizing the district's approved germicidal cleaner (e.g. Wexcide*).
- Check the HVAC System servicing the complaint area. Make sure HVAC filters are clean and installed properly. Clean and sanitize HVAC supply and return grills within complaint areas utilizing the district's approved germicidal cleaner (e.g. Wexcide*). If the complaint is due to temperature or humidity, initiate a work order for HVAC repairs.
- Check the complaint area for other items or furnishings that may contribute to poor IAQ. Remove any live plants or animals from complaint areas. Remove all chemicals and room deodorizers/air fresheners from complaint areas. Remove all stuffed animals, cardboard boxes, excess papers, books, and stored items from the complaint area.
- Check the complaint area for visible microbial growth. Any hard, non-porous surfaces with visible microbial growth should be cleaned and sanitized utilizing the district's approved germicidal cleaner (e.g. Wexcide*), **providing microbial growth does not cover more than 10 sq. feet of surface area.**

- Ensure Physical Plant Operations completes all work orders in the complaint area and all areas are returned to clean un-damaged condition. In the event, visible microbial growth returns after cleaning, or if the area of growth is greater than 10 sq. feet, or visible growth is located on porous materials (e.g. drywall, paper, ceiling tile, or fabric furnishings), immediately contact the Environmental Health & Safety Department at 754-321-4200.

** When utilizing any district approved chemical it is important to ensure the product is utilized in accordance to manufacturer's labeled directions and appropriate personal protection is worn.*

Most IAQ complaints can be satisfied simply by completing these simple response procedures as outlined above.

Wait 30 days after completing the steps above, if you receive an additional IAQ complaint for the same area after the 30 days has expired, then an IAQ Assessment should be requested from the Environmental Health & Safety Department.

Operational Procedures

1. In the event that the corrective measures identified above have not satisfactorily resolved an occupant complaint, the location Administrator shall be notified and the complaint shall be referred to Environmental Health & Safety by completing an IAQ Assessment Request.
2. An IAQ Assessment Team member from the Environmental Health & Safety Department will contact you within 48 hours after receiving the request, to gather information and prioritize the complaint.
3. An IAQ Assessment Team member will then conduct the IAQ assessment of the complaint area in a timely manner.

4. The IAQ Assessment Team is responsible for reviewing the nature of a complaint, identifying sources triggering a complaint and developing a recommended course of action to remedy issues.
5. The written course of action will identify all issues posing an immediate health hazard, identify and ensure appropriate measures are taken to protect the health and safety of all building occupants, specify measures to be taken and individuals responsible for these actions.
6. All parties responsible for corrective actions will be identified as site-based custodial, Physical Plant Operations, or Facilities & Construction, based on the nature and scope of work to be completed. *The Facilities & Construction Management department is responsible for determining the most expedient manner to complete a scope of work requiring services of Facilities & Construction.*
7. Microbial damaged materials will be remediated utilizing the Environmental Protection Agency's "Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings" guidelines. These remediation specifications outline various levels of contamination and appropriate procedures to remediate such contaminated materials.
8. The Environmental Health & Safety Department will maintain a database of all complaints pertaining to IAQ issues. Information will be recorded identifying the nature of a complaint and a recommended course of action to resolve these issues.
9. Thirty days after an IAQ Assessment is completed, a representative from the Environmental Health & Safety Department will contact the party requesting an assessment to ensure all recommended corrective actions were completed and the complaint was resolved.