



Indoor Air Quality

Reference: http://www.cmhc.ca/en/imquaf/hehosu/hehorepl_010.cfm

CMHC's Healthy Housing™ concept promotes a vision of housing that is both healthy for the occupant and healthy for the planet. Indoor air quality is one of the key factors in occupant health. For the past 10 years, CMHC has been carrying out extensive research into the impact of indoor air quality on the health of Canadians.

The need for clean air in our homes should not be underestimated. Canadians spend an average of 90% of their time inside, and our homes contain many substances that may be hazardous to our health. Indoor air pollutants range from minor irritants such as dust and animal dander, to major irritants such as molds and chemical vapours that may be emitted from building materials and furnishings.

One in five Canadians suffer from some type of lung disease (asthma, emphysema, lung cancer) and many more Canadians are affected by allergies. The air we breathe is a factor in all these conditions, therefore, it is vital that we implement the necessary steps to ensure the highest level of indoor air quality.

Some practical tips to improve indoor air quality include:

- Stop smoking.
- Avoid the use of pesticides.
- Guard yourself against carbon monoxide.
- Ensure regular maintenance of the furnace.
- Reduce moisture and mold in the home by repairing roof and foundation cracks.
- Grade soil to allow water to flow away from the house.
- Dehumidify the basement.
- Reduce the amount of stored materials in the house.
- Choose building and renovating materials with low levels of chemical emissions.
- Minimize the use of harsh chemical cleaners and deodorizers.
- Use unscented cleaning compounds.

It is important to be aware of how air contaminants can affect our health and to adopt corrective measures that will improve indoor air quality in our homes.

CMHC has the following resources available for you to learn more about indoor air quality:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Asbestos</u>• <u>Carbon Monoxide</u>• <u>Combustion Gases in Your Home</u>• <u>Choosing a Dehumidifier</u>• <u>Fighting Mold — The Homeowner's Guide</u>• <u>Urea-Formaldehyde Foam Insulation (UFFI)</u>• <u>Measuring Humidity in Your Home</u>• <u>The Importance of Bathroom and Kitchen Fans</u>• <u>Your Furnace Filter</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Should You Get Your Heating Ducts Cleaned?</u>• <u>Testing Airflow</u>• <u>Maintaining your Heat Recovery Ventilator</u>• <u>How to Read a Material Safety Data Sheet</u>• <u>After the Flood</u>• <u>The Condominium Owner's Guide to Mold</u>• <u>Water Damage, Mold and House Insurance</u>• <u>Avoiding Basement Flooding</u>• <u>Fighting Asthma in Your Home</u>
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For a complete listing of CMHC's priced publications on Indoor Air Quality and other aspects of Healthy Housing, visit the [Order Desk](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/) at <http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/>

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