

SECTION 14–INDOOR AIR QUALITY **(IAQ)**

14.1 IAQ Concerns

14.2 IAQ Log

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14.1 INDOOR AIR QUALITY CONCERNS

A. Objective

To maintain a healthy and comfortable indoor environment. To accomplish this, Physical Plant will coordinate appropriate and practical proactive, investigative, and corrective measures concerning indoor air quality matters with specific departments.

B. Scope

The scope of this program is extended to the entire campus community. Employees should report Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) deficiencies and complaints to their supervisor, who should in turn report the matter to Physical Plant for corrective measures.

C. References

Illinois Indoor Air Quality Act 410 ILCS 87, Illinois Clean Indoor Air Act 410 ILCS 80, ASHRAE Standard 55-1992 and ASHRAE Standard 62-1999.

D. IAQ Program

The most common origins of IAQ problems arise from a variety of sources inside and outside the buildings. Airborne chemicals, bacteria, fungi, pollen, dust, and vehicle exhaust can all contribute to the problem, as well as other factors such as temperature, humidity, lighting, noise, personal and work-related stress, and pre-existing health conditions. These factors, combinations of the factors and short term unidentified events combine to make identification of a source difficult and sometimes impossible.

A typical investigation of an IAQ complaint should with a call to the Physical Plant. Maintenance or Utilities can investigate and remedy straightforward issues such as incorrectly set or inoperative thermostats, malfunctioning fans, odors from dry floor drains, and transient odors from maintenance activities. If the problem is caused by a more complex situation, such as inadequate ventilation or excessive mold, then the problem may require a more detailed investigation. The Manager of Environmental Health & Safety can conduct this investigation. Sometimes the remedy involves an extensive project and may be delayed by the need for non-routine sources of funding. Some actions building occupants can take to help maintain good IAQ are as follows:

- Report poor indoor environmental conditions (e.g. stuffy air, heat or cooling problems, annoying odors, etc.) to Physical Plant at ext. 6350.
- Report water intrusion into buildings as soon as possible to Physical Plant at ext. 6350 . The longer building materials remain damp the more likely the potential for excessive microbial growth.
- Limit the use of products that produce odors or volatile solvents to specifically designed rooms, preferably with local exhaust ventilation. This also applies to equipment that generates excessive heat or produces odors.
- Minimize generation of dust or aerosols in the work area.
- Maintain good housekeeping in work areas and break areas. Throw away garbage and old food and clean up spills promptly.

- Do not bring in ozone producing devices on campus. Often vendors of ozone producing devices make statements that lead the public to believe that these devices are always safe and an effective in controlling indoor air pollution. In reality these devices have **not** been proven safe in occupied spaces. When inhaled, high concentrations of ozone can damage the lungs and lead to health problems such as throat irritation, coughing, chest pain, and shortness of breath.

If you feel that you are experiencing health effects due to the IAQ report these to your supervisor. If symptoms persist proceed to the Health and Psychological Services for a health evaluation. It is recommended that employees experiencing repeated discomfort keep a log of when the discomforts occur. The log should include some of the following: date, time of day, discomfort, length of time of discomfort, any unusual odors experienced and outside conditions at the time. (See *Section 14.2 of the EH&S Manual*) The recording of events in a log might point to activities taken place inside or outside the building.

