

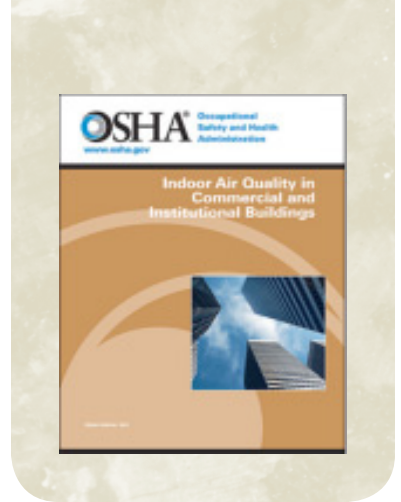
New Document from the Occupational Safety & Health Administration Outlines Importance of Indoor Air Quality in Commercial & Institutional Buildings



This important US OSHA "guidance" document concisely outlines Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) issues in buildings and reinforces the practical need for some core measurements (including VOCs, Differential Pressure, Carbon Monoxide, Carbon Dioxide and Particulates), and for the ability to perform and document "walkthrough inspections". Although OSHA is not legislating IAQ, the guidance from this document is highly useful for any facility manager, industrial hygienist, environmental consultant, HVAC contractor or other professional that is involved with (or should be aware of) this vital issue.

You can download the OSHA IAQ Guideline here:

<http://www.osha.gov/Publications/3430indoor-air-quality-sm.pdf>



Some Out-Takes from the OSHA Guideline:

- Experts believe that more people may suffer from the effects of indoor air pollution than from outdoor air pollution
- Good IAQ in buildings is an important component of a healthy indoor environment. Significant increases in worker productivity have also been demonstrated when the air quality was adequate
- Methods used in an IAQ investigation may include measuring contamination levels
- Ensure and validate that the building is maintained under a slight positive pressure as negative pressure may cause infiltration of outdoor pollutants such as particulates, vehicle exhaust, humid air, parking garage contaminants, etc.
- Monitor carbon dioxide (CO₂) levels. The carbon dioxide levels can be used as a rough indicator of the effectiveness of ventilation
- Check whether the temperature and humidity are maintained in a recommended comfort range (temperature: 68 to 78 degrees F and relative humidity: 30% to 60%)
- Exposure to VOCs can result in both acute and long-term health effects. In offices, VOCs result from new furnishings, wall coverings, and office equipment (as examples)
- Mechanical engineers - test and balance HVAC systems
- Industrial hygienists - assess general IAQ parameters such as air changes in a building, carbon dioxide levels, carbon monoxide levels, and other indoor pollutants, and also evaluate contaminant levels
- Ensure that scheduled renovations are isolated from the building's general dilution ventilation system when occupants are in the building
- Measure pressure drops across the filtration system

