

INDOOR AIR QUALITY [IAQ] GUIDE

IAQ problems are the result of inadequate ventilation, chemical contamination or microbial contamination. However, they are sometimes caused by more than one condition.



The term “IAQ” includes the chemical, physical and biological characteristics of indoor air, which can affect the comfort or health of the occupants.

IAQ Investigation Procedures:

- ❑ **When a concern or problem is reported to Environmental Services [ES], initial information will be derived to determine the extent of the problem.**
- ❑ **The employee’s Supervisor, the Department Administrator and the Building Manager will be notified by ES to verify “awareness” to the problem. In some cases it will be the Supervisor, Department Administrator or the Building Manager who is reporting the incident to ES.**
- ❑ **Each IAQ reported will be investigated by the ES Department. The investigator will go to the area for a general walkthrough and may be accompanied by the Building Manager, depending on the scope of the problem. In all cases, ES will coordinate with the Building Manager of the plan of action that will be taken on the initial visit to the site.**
- ❑ **Following the initial data gathering by ES, if a problem exists that can not be easily fixed, then the Building Manager, Department Administrator and the investigator will have to agree upon a recommended plan of action. Supervisor and occupants will be notified of the recommended course of action.**

- ❑ **If the problem involves the HVAC system, the HVAC Department must be contacted via e-mail. A work order number should be requested by ES to follow up on the completion of the work.**
- ❑ **Follow-ups will occur every two weeks documented by e-mails to the occupants, Supervisor and Building Manager until the problem has been defined and/or resolved.**
- ❑ **Once the problem has been mitigated, a report will be submitted to the Building Manager summarizing the problem, investigation procedures and resolution(s).**
- ❑ **If a problem has been identified that can be resolved internally, a memo/e-mail will be sent to the responsible NYU personnel delineating the actions to be taken, with a copy sent to the Building Manager, Supervisor, and Department Administrator. Verbal notification will be given to the occupant(s) with the concern.**
- ❑ **If the problem is not identifiable or if the problem cannot be resolved internally, a memo/e-mail will be sent to the Building Manager stating the findings and possibility of retaining outside consultants. A copy will be sent to the Supervisor and Department Administrator who will verbally notify the occupant(s) with the concern the course of actions to be taken.**

Reducing Potential For Development of Mold:

- ❑ **Fix leaky plumbing as soon as possible.**
- ❑ **Watch for condensation and wet spots. Fix the source of moisture as soon as possible.**
- ❑ **Prevent moisture due to condensation by insulation, repairing leaks, increasing ventilation [fans] and/or dehumidifying.**
- ❑ **Keep heating, ventilation and air conditioning [HVAC] drip pans clean, flowing properly and unobstructed.**
- ❑ **Vent moisture-generating equipment such as dryers to the outside when possible.**
- ❑ **Maintain indoor humidity between 30-50%, if possible, but not greater than 60%.**

- ❑ **Perform regular building/HVAC inspections and maintenance as scheduled.**
- ❑ **Clean and dry wet or damp spots within 48 hours.**

Procedure For Flooding by Clean Water:

- ❑ **Remove standing water within 24-48 hours of flooding. Notify ES as soon as the flooding is discovered [Ext. 81450].**
- ❑ **Remove all wet materials and discard.**
- ❑ **Dry out all surfaces using fans and/or dehumidifiers. This procedure may take a few weeks. Furniture [e.g., desks, bookcases, etc.] must be moved from wet carpeted areas so drying will be complete.**
- ❑ **Clean and disinfect all surfaces. Cleaning staff should make sure they have the appropriate protective equipment based on the container labels. Carpets are to be sanitized professionally.**
- ❑ **Contact ES after the drying, cleaning and sanitizing processes are completed for a final inspection. If mold is suspected or visible, ES will contact a consultant for evaluation.**
- ❑ **Guidelines for water damaged materials:**
 - **Books/Papers - Discard non-valuable items or photocopy valuable/important items and discard originals**
 - **Carpet & Backing – Remove water with extraction vacuum. Reduce humidity levels with dehumidifier and accelerate drying process with fans.**
 - **Ceiling Tiles – Discard and replace.**
 - **Cellulose/Fiberglass Insulation – Discard and replace.**
 - **Concrete/Cinder Block Surfaces – Remove water with extraction vacuum. Accelerate drying with dehumidifiers, fans and/or heaters.**
 - **Linoleum/Ceramic Tile/Vinyl – Vacuum or damp wipe with water and mild detergent and allow drying. Scrub if necessary. Check to make sure underflooring is dry. Dry underflooring if necessary.**
 - **Non-porous Surfaces [Metals/Plastics] - Vacuum or damp wipe with water and mild detergent and allow drying. Scrub if necessary.**
 - **Upholstered Furniture - Remove water with extraction vacuum. Accelerate drying with dehumidifiers, fans and/or heaters. Maybe difficult to completely dry within 48 hours.**

QUICK TIPS

- **Wallboard** – May be dried in place if there are no obvious swelling and seams are intact. If not, remove, discard and replace. Ventilate wall cavity, if possible.
- **Window Drapes** – Follow laundering or cleaning instructions recommended by manufacturer.
- **Wood Surfaces** – Remove moisture immediately and use dehumidifiers, gentle heat and fans for drying. Treated or finished wood surfaces maybe cleaned with mild detergent and clean water and allowed to dry. Wet paneling should be pried away from wall for drying.