

## **Chapter 16**

### **Indoor Air Quality**

#### **16-1. General**

Good indoor air quality is an environment that contributes to a favorable, productive atmosphere and enables building occupants to experience a sense of well being. This chapter establishes guidelines for facility managers, Collateral Duty Safety Officers, and managers to provide a safe and healthful workplace for all administrative areas.

#### **16-2. Policy**

Although there is no specific policy on indoor air quality, employers are required to furnish employees a safe and healthful workplace. This includes good indoor air quality. The Indoor Air Quality Committee will assist with solutions or instructions on actions to take concerning various odors, mold or moisture problems.

#### **16-3. Responsibilities**

a. Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Committee is comprised of members of the Installation Safety Office, Directorate of Public Works (DPW), Operations and Environmental Management Office (EMO), and Preventive Medicine Services (PMS). The IAQ Committee will evaluate employee indoor air quality concerns/complaints and will work together to make recommendations for air quality improvement.

b. Supervisors will:

(1) Evacuate the building and then call 911 if there is a suspected gas leak.

(2) Report water leaks, mold or mildew growth, and unusual odors to Facility Managers or DPW either by calling in a service order or preparing a work order. Supervisors can also contact a member of the Indoor Air Quality Committee to evaluate the situation.

(3) Work with Facility Manager, DPW, and contract personnel to ensure indoor air quality is maintained during renovations, installations, or applications which might alter the indoor environmental conditions.

(4) Enforce the following practices to help indoor air quality:

(a) Do not cover or block vents and diffusers.

(b) Ensure employees refrain from opening windows when the heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) system is being utilized.

(c) Avoid using room deodorizers.

(d) Do not park or operate vehicles or other exhaust producing equipment near buildings.

(e) Wipe surfaces with a damp cloth to reduce dust.

(f) Do not allow food to be left in trash cans overnight.

c. Facility managers will:

(1) Ensure all inhabitants of administrative areas will have a healthful and safe area to include proper indoor air quality and thermal comfort.

(2) Initiate work orders to correct deficiencies and route them through the Installation Safety Office for a Risk Assessment Code (RAC).

(3) Become familiar with the mechanical systems of the facility with the aid of DPW. Inspections by the facility manager and the union representative with maintenance personnel should be encouraged.

(4) To ensure good indoor air quality, the following actions will be taken:

(a) All sources of water and moisture incursion are identified and fixed as soon as possible. Dry water damaged areas within a 24 to 48 hour period to prevent mold growth. Indoor relative humidity levels should not exceed 60 %; ideal levels should be kept between 30% and 50%.

(b) Filter media is changed on schedule.

(c) Condensate trays are kept dry and serviceable, and drain lines are kept clear.

(d) Outside air inlets, if applicable, are kept in the open position.

(e) All diffusers remain in the open position.

(f) Employees will not be exposed to any chemicals during cleaning and rescaling of HVAC systems in the proximity of the workplace.

(g) No unauthorized personnel will adjust, open, close, or otherwise tamper with diffusers, thus affecting the ventilation balance.

(h) Contract representatives will interface with the activity supervisor and facility manager before any chemicals are used or any work is done in the facility to ensure a safe environment is maintained at all times.

(i) Pesticide applications, carpet or flooring installations or general renovations in occupied facilities will be executed only after the supervisor and facility manager have had proper coordination with the contractor to ensure provisions have been made for hypersensitive employees.

(j) Be vigilant in keeping ventilation air supply sources free of vehicle exhaust emissions or any other undesirable fumes.

(k) Request an indoor air quality assessment by the IAQ Committee in writing explaining the need for a survey, such as increased illnesses, headaches, etc.

(l) Clean areas where mold colonies are suspected that are less than 10 square feet in size. Clean soiled hard surfaces with water and detergent, and dry completely. Absorbent materials such as ceiling tiles that are moldy will need to be replaced.

(m) Problems of acute illness involving life and health will require calling 911 for assistance.

(5) *Thermal comfort.*

(a) In the winter during the heating season, thermostats will be set at 68 degrees Fahrenheit..

(b) In the summer during cooling season, temperatures will be set to 74 degrees Fahrenheit.

(6) In case of mechanical ventilation failure, common sense will prevail.

(a) Attempt to relocate personnel to work areas with proper temperature.

(b) Release personnel on administrative leave only after proper chain of command and Civilian Personnel Advisory Center have been consulted.

(7) *Energy Conservation.*

(a) Extenuating circumstances may necessitate building supply air systems to be operated regardless of weekend or holiday schedules. This will be determined as the need arises.

(b) Extenuating medical circumstances for personnel will be identified to the Occupational Health Physician for resolution.