



Pollutants

FACT SHEET 8

SUBJECT BEING ADDRESSED BY THIS FACT SHEET

Main sources of pollutants that impact indoor air quality and how to mitigate their impact.

WHO IS THE TARGET AUDIENCE FOR THIS FACT SHEET?

Dwelling and Building Occupiers and Owners.

IN THE OFFICE

Office workers concentration will decrease by between 30% and 50% as the temperature rises above 24°C.

THE FACTS

The main sources of pollutants that impact indoor air quality can vary depending on the specific environment, but some common sources include:

1. Tobacco smoke:

Smoking indoors can release toxic chemicals and particles into the air, significantly affecting air quality.

2. Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs):

VOCs are emitted by many household products such as paints, cleaning agents, adhesives, and certain types of furniture. To reduce their impact, choose low-VOC or VOC-free products and ensure good ventilation when using them. High levels of VOC are also generated during the cooking process, and when operating some electronic equipment. Ensure adequate ventilation in high risk areas, and when using some electronic equipment

3. Biological contaminants:

These include mould, dust mites, pet dander, and pollen. Regular cleaning, vacuuming, and maintaining proper humidity levels can help; mitigate the impact of these contaminants. Additionally, using air purifiers and ensuring good ventilation can be beneficial.

4. Combustion byproducts:

Gas stoves, gas hobs, and gas fired boilers / heating systems, fireplaces, and improperly ventilated appliances can release harmful gases and fine particulate like carbon monoxide and nitrogen dioxide. It is important to ensure proper ventilation and regular maintenance of such appliances to minimize their impact.

5. Asbestos and lead:

Older buildings may have materials containing asbestos or lead-based paint, which can release hazardous particles into the air. If you suspect the presence of these materials, it is essential to consult professionals for safe removal.

To mitigate the impact of indoor air pollutants, you can take the following steps:

1. Improve ventilation:

Increase the amount of fresh air entering your space by opening windows, using exhaust fans, or installing a mechanical ventilation system.

2. Use air purifiers:

Consider using high-quality air purifiers with HEPA filters to remove particles and allergens from the air.

3. Maintain cleanliness:

Regularly clean and dust your living space, vacuum carpets and upholstery, and wash bedding to minimize the accumulation of contaminants.

4. Avoid smoking indoors:

Completely eliminate indoor smoking to prevent the release of harmful chemicals into the air.

5. Choose low-emission products:

Opt for low-VOC or VOC-free household products, paints, and furniture to minimize the release of harmful chemicals.

6. Control humidity:

Keep indoor humidity levels between 30-50% to inhibit the growth of mould and dust mites.

7. Follow manufactures guidance:

Read and follow operating instructions to ensure appliances are operated correctly and in such a way to minimise potential emissions.

Next steps for the target audience

It is important to assess your specific environment and tailor your mitigation strategies accordingly. If you have specific concerns or require professional advice, consider consulting an indoor air quality expert.