A Fast Look from EHHI

A Healthful Home Checklist

Practical Steps to Create a Healthier Indoor Environment

Our homes should support health, not contribute to unnecessary environmental exposures. Many potential environmental health risks can be reduced through informed choices and routine household practices. While no home can eliminate every environmental exposure, small changes can help create healthier living environments for you and your family.

Indoor Air Quality

- ☐ Do not allow smoking or vaping inside the home.
- ☐ Replace HVAC filters regularly according to manufacturer recommendations.
- ☐ Use kitchen exhaust fans when cooking.
- ☐ Vent bathrooms to reduce excess moisture and mold.
- ☐ Open windows when weather and outdoor air quality permit.
- ☐ Test your home for radon if you live in an area where radon is a concern.
- ☐ Consider using a portable HEPA air cleaner in frequently occupied rooms if needed.

Drinking Water

- ☐ Review your community's annual Consumer Confidence Report.
- ☐ Test private well water regularly if your home uses a well.
- ☐ Learn whether PFAS, lead, arsenic, or nitrates have been detected in your local water supply.
- ☐ Consider using a certified water filter if recommended for your area.

Household Products

- ☐ Follow product label instructions carefully.
- ☐ Store chemicals safely away from children.
- ☐ Dispose of paints, solvents, pesticides, and cleaners through local hazardous waste programs.
- ☐ Choose products with fewer unnecessary chemicals.

Food & Food Storage

- ☐ Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly.
- ☐ Store food in glass, stainless steel, or ceramic containers.
- ☐ Avoid microwaving food in plastic containers unless they are specifically designed for microwave use.
- ☐ Reduce unnecessary use of single-use plastics for food and beverages.

Cleaning

- ☐ Vacuum regularly using a HEPA-filter.
- ☐ Wet dust (instead of dry dust) surfaces.
- ☐ Clean visible mold promptly and correct moisture problems.
- ☐ Remove shoes at the door to reduce tracking pesticides, lead, and other contaminants indoors.

Pest Management

- ☐ Prevent pests by sealing cracks and eliminating food and water sources.
- ☐ Use integrated pest management (IPM) practices whenever possible.
- ☐ Follow pesticide directions carefully if chemical treatments are necessary.

Renovations

- ☐ Choose low-VOC paints and finishes.
- ☐ Ventilate during painting or remodeling.
- ☐ Older homes may contain lead-based paint or asbestos. Follow recommended safety practices before disturbing these materials.

Children

- ☐ Wash children's hands before eating.
- ☐ Clean toys and frequently touched surfaces regularly.
- ☐ Choose age-appropriate products that meet current safety standards.
- ☐ Avoid unnecessary exposure to tobacco smoke and vaping aerosols.

Stay Informed

- ☐ Read EHHI's environmental health resources.
- ☐ Follow updates from trusted public health organizations.
- ☐ Learn about environmental health issues affecting your community.

Small Changes Can Make a Difference

Creating a healthier home doesn't require doing everything at once. Many environmental health risks can be reduced through simple, practical actions taken over time. By staying informed and making thoughtful choices, families can help create healthier indoor environments that support lifelong health.

EHHI is dedicated to protecting human health from environmental harms through research, education, and the promotion of sound public policies.

Learn more and keep up to date on environmental issues that impact human health at...

EHHI.org

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A Fast Look from EHHI

A Healthful School Checklist

Practical Steps for Teachers, Parents, Administrators, & Students

Children spend a large part of their day at school. Simple choices about air quality, cleaning, transportation, water, pesticides, building materials, and school grounds can help reduce unnecessary environmental exposures.

For School Administrators

- ☐ Enforce a no-idling policy for school buses and vehicles near buildings, loading areas, and air intakes.
- ☐ Fix leaks, damp areas, and visible mold promptly.
- ☐ Maintain ventilation systems and provide appropriate exhaust ventilation in science and art rooms.
- ☐ Use integrated pest management and avoid routine pesticide applications.
- ☐ Choose lower-toxicity cleaning products and building materials.
- ☐ Test schools for radon and drinking water for contaminants such as lead and arsenic.
- ☐ Avoid shredded tire mulch on playgrounds and consider natural grass when replacing or building athletic fields.
- ☐ Plan renovations so dust, fumes, adhesives, paints, and other emissions do not unnecessarily expose students or staff.

For Teachers & School Staff

- ☐ Report water leaks, dampness, mold, unusual odors, or ventilation problems promptly.
- ☐ Do not bring pesticides or unnecessary cleaning chemicals into classrooms.
- ☐ Keep art and science materials properly stored and use them only with adequate ventilation.
- ☐ Keep classroom air vents and returns unobstructed.
- ☐ Speak up when buses or other vehicles are routinely idling near students or school buildings.

For Parents & Families

- ☐ Ask your school about its pesticide and integrated pest management practices.
- ☐ Ask whether the school tests drinking water and the building for radon.
- ☐ Encourage your district to enforce school-bus and vehicle no-idling policies.
- ☐ Learn what materials are used on playgrounds and athletic fields.
- ☐ Report environmental concerns to teachers, administrators, the school nurse, or facilities staff.

For Students

- ☐ Tell an adult if you notice water leaks, visible mold, strong chemical odors, or vehicle exhaust near school.
- ☐ Wash your hands before eating and after outdoor activities.
- ☐ Follow safety instructions when using chemicals or materials in art and science classes.
- ☐ Avoid spending unnecessary time near idling buses and cars.
- ☐ Help keep classrooms, school grounds, and drinking-water areas clean.

Healthier Schools Start with Awareness

Creating a healthier school does not require doing everything at once. Many exposures can be reduced through good maintenance, thoughtful purchasing, better ventilation, safer pest management, cleaner transportation practices, and attention to the spaces where children learn and play.

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A Healthful Workplace Checklist

Practical Steps to Create a Healthier Work Environment

Most adults spend a significant portion of their day at work. Good indoor air quality, safe building practices, and informed workplace policies can help reduce unnecessary environmental exposures while supporting employee health and productivity.

For Employers & Building Managers

- ☐ Maintain heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems according to manufacturer recommendations.
- ☐ Replace HVAC filters regularly.
- ☐ Address water leaks, dampness, and visible mold promptly.
- ☐ Provide adequate fresh air and ventilation throughout the building.
- ☐ Use low-VOC paints, flooring, furnishings, and renovation materials.
- ☐ Choose cleaning products with fewer unnecessary hazardous chemicals.
- ☐ Implement integrated pest management (IPM) before using pesticides.
- ☐ Test for radon where appropriate.
- ☐ Know your building's drinking water source and test for contaminants.
- ☐ Establish and enforce a smoke-free and vape-free workplace.

For Employees

- ☐ Report water leaks, mold, unusual odors, or ventilation concerns.
- ☐ Keep air vents and returns unobstructed.
- ☐ Follow safety instructions when using chemicals or equipment.
- ☐ Limit unnecessary use of air fresheners and scented products in shared spaces.
- ☐ Wash hands before eating and after handling chemicals or supplies.
- ☐ Reduce unnecessary single-use plastics for food and beverages.
- ☐ Store food in glass, stainless steel, or ceramic containers.
- ☐ Avoid microwaving food in plastic containers unless they are labeled microwave-safe.
- ☐ Stay home when ill to help maintain a healthier workplace.

Shared Responsibility

- ☐ Prevent pests by sealing cracks and Encourage walking, biking, public transit, or carpooling when practical.
- ☐ Support recycling and waste reduction programs.
- ☐ Learn about environmental health issues that may affect your workplace.
- ☐ Promote a culture where employees feel comfortable reporting environmental concerns.

Healthy Workplaces Benefit Everyone

Creating a healthier workplace doesn't require doing everything at once. Small improvements to indoor air quality, building maintenance, drinking water, purchasing decisions, and workplace practices can help reduce environmental exposures while creating healthier places to work.

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