



Maintaining indoor air quality is important for the health of you and your family

We all know that clean air is essential to our health. Government agencies regularly monitor the environment and enforce pollution control laws, but maintaining indoor air quality is your responsibility.

Many ordinary substances pollute air in our homes. Paint fumes, dust, and tobacco smoke are common air pollutants. The effects of long-term exposure to these pollutants are not fully known. What is known are the effects of long-term exposure to the more dangerous substances such as radon, asbestos, lead and mold sometimes found in the home.

Radon

Radon is a colorless, odorless, radioactive gas released by uranium in the soil. Normally radon disperses into the open air, but when it gets trapped in a home, it can accumulate into dangerous concentrations.

Radon enters a home through cracks in the foundation, through porous cinder block, and through spaces around loose-fitting pipes and drains. It's found in homes all over the country. There is no way to predict its presence from one area to another.

Testing for radon can be done quickly and accurately by a radon measurement company. If the test shows a high radon concentration, ask for professional advice to reduce the level.

Asbestos

Asbestos was commonly used in building materials (roofing, flooring, pipe insulation, acoustical tiles, and cement compounds) in homes built prior to 1980. As long as asbestos remains intact, it is not a health risk. When it deteriorates and its fibers become airborne, they can easily be inhaled and eventually cause health problems. A professional inspector can tell you if asbestos is present in your home.

Removing the asbestos is not always the best thing to do. Depending on the situation, an asbestos removal company can remove it or encase it. Asbestos removal is not a do-it-yourself job. Let the professionals do it for you.

Lead

The lead in paint can cause lead poisoning, a quite serious condition, especially for children. Some paint manufacturers stopped producing lead-based paints as early as 1940. By 1978 the government banned all lead from residential paint.

Today some homes still have areas painted with lead-based paint. If you think your home might have lead-based paint, a professional lead inspector can test it for you. It is important that all painted surfaces accessible to small children be lead-free.

Improper removal of lead-based paint introduces toxins into the air which can cause lead poisoning. Instead of removal, you should replace or completely enclose objects covered with lead-based paint whenever possible. If the paint is in good condition, you can cover it with wallpaper, paneling, plaster, or drywall.

Mold

Mold can grow wherever there is a significant source of moisture. Some types of mold cause allergic reactions. Others can release dangerous toxins into the air. Water damage in your home should be quickly corrected. A professional inspection can best determine if there is a mold hazard in your home.

