

What Is Indoor Air Quality?

WE'RE GLAD YOU ASKED!



Air pollution surrounds us daily...car exhaust, smog, indoor air. Indoor air? Yes, indoor air quality is important to your health. Your exposure to air pollutants can be up to 100 times higher indoors than outdoors. The American Lung Association estimates that most people spend 90% of their time indoors. So, clean indoor air is important.

WHAT CAUSES INDOOR AIR POLLUTION?

Many everyday, unsuspecting household items contribute to poor indoor air quality. Compounds found in carpeting, furniture, upholstery and drapery fabric constantly “off-gas” or emit fumes. Other sources of pollutants can include, but are not limited to, cleaning agents, paints and personal care products.

Newer, more energy-efficient homes do not “breathe” like older homes. Things like weather-stripping and storm doors keep indoor air in, and outdoor air out. This provides energy savings, but the limited exchange of outdoor and indoor air can mean a build-up of contaminants inside your home.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF CLEAN AIR

Allergies and asthma are two health problems that can be helped with clean indoor air. When airborne irritants are removed, allergy and asthma sufferers often find relief from their symptoms.

Even healthy people who have never suffered from allergies can benefit from clean air. Dust,

smoke and other particles float around in the air causing your drapes and furniture to gather dust. By removing airborne dust particles, you reduce the amount of exposure they have on your respiratory system.

HOW CAN I IMPROVE INDOOR AIR?

ELIMINATE

The first step to improving your indoor air is to identify the sources of air pollutants. Eliminating these sources, to the extent feasible, is the most effective way to clean the air.

Chemicals in carpets, household cleaners, furniture and building materials, just to mention a few, all contribute to poor indoor air quality. Damp basements and other areas where standing water is prevalent can become the breeding grounds for pollutants such as mold, mildew and other microbes.

Although it is not possible to eliminate every contaminant source, reducing the sources and/or the amount of pollutants they emit, will contribute to a healthier living environment.

VENTILATE

Knowing that not every source can be eliminated completely, ventilation plays an important role in improving indoor air quality. However, in an effort to increase energy efficiency, today's homes are being built tighter, make it increasingly difficult to have the proper amount of exchange between indoor and outdoor air. Improper ventilation can lead to an increase in the concentration of pollutants inside your home.

To increase ventilation, open doors and windows, particularly when you are using cleaning agents. Also, make sure to operate any exhaust fans your home may have.

An HVAC specialist can also assist you in recommending ways you can increase the ventilation within your home. Your dealer may suggest the installation of an outdoor air connection or the use of a heat recovery ventilator (HRV), or energy recovery ventilator (ERV). HRV's and ERV's work similarly, bringing fresh air into your home, and exhausting stale air out. They conserve energy from indoor conditioned air and transfer it to incoming outside air.

CLEAN

A third way you can minimize the concentration of pollutants in your indoor air is by thoroughly cleaning your living spaces.

Frequent dusting and vacuuming can help to reduce the amount of dust particles in the air. Washing bedding in hot water (at least 130° F) is the only way to kill dust mites.

Not only will your indoor air quality improve, but your furnishings will benefit as well. They will stay cleaner, look better, and hopefully, last longer!

Although these methods are effective, not all airborne particles can be removed. Some particles are so small, they may escape through the vacuum, or never land on a surface. To capture these particles, products such as electronic air cleaners (EAC's) and high-efficiency air filters can be beneficial. EAC's and high-efficiency filters help clean the air and provide respiratory relief by removing dust, dirt and pollen.

QUALITY DEALERS YOU CAN COUNT ON

Indoor air quality should be an integral part of your home comfort system. Ask your dealer about the complete line of indoor air quality solutions from Lennox. Your family's health and comfort are a priority, and working together, we can help to provide you with a "breath of fresh air."

Call your local Lennox dealer about updating your home comfort system. The benefits you'll feel and see will be worth it!

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