

Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE)

What Are You Breathing in Your Home?

You can do something to reduce indoor air pollution and make your home healthier for everyone who lives there. Here are some tips from the Martindale-Brightwood Environmental Justice Collaborative and Improving Kids' Environment:

Image: Paul Brentnall / FreeDigitalPhotos.net



Smoke

Second-hand smoke is very damaging to young lungs. Don't smoke around children, especially babies and toddlers. Discourage others from smoking around kids, too.

Image: Suat Eman / FreeDigitalPhotos.net



Hair Spray, Bug Spray and Cleaning Products

Don't spray these around babies and small children. Keep pests out by sealing cracks, reducing sources of food and water, and sealing trash cans. Avoid using pesticides and other chemicals.

Image: Simon Howden / FreeDigitalPhotos.net



Fumes from Hobbies or Redecorating

If you use solvents, paint, or paint strippers as part of a hobby or redecorating project, open windows or doors to let fresh air in. Keep children away from these fumes.

Image: djcodrin / FreeDigitalPhotos.net



Exhaust from Stoves, Furnaces and Kerosene Heaters

Make sure gas stoves and furnaces are properly adjusted and maintained, especially if they are older. Gas and kerosene appliances can send dangerous carbon monoxide and other gases into your home. Make sure their exhaust is properly vented to the outdoors.



Mold Spores

Mold is everywhere in the air. Some molds can produce toxins that can harm your health. Control mold by reducing moisture and repairing leaks in your home.



Asbestos Fibers

Old insulation and tiles can contain asbestos, which can cause lung disease if asbestos fibers are released into the air. Avoid disturbing tiles or insulation in your home.



How Can Indoor Air Harm My Health?



Indoor air pollution can irritate the eyes, nose and throat. It can cause headaches, dizziness and fatigue. If you have asthma and other breathing problems, indoor air pollution can cause an attack.

Who is most affected by indoor air pollution? Small children, the elderly and people with preexisting medical conditions are most susceptible. Each person reacts differently to pollution in the air.



After repeated exposure, some people can become over-sensitive to bacteria, molds, mildew, viruses, animal dander and cat saliva, house dust, mites, cockroaches, and pollen. It appears that some people can become sensitized to chemicals in the air as well.

Long-term Effects. Sometimes, health problems show up years after exposure to air pollution, or after repeated exposure over a long period of time. Lung disease, heart disease and cancer can be caused by long-term or repeated exposure to indoor air pollution. Exposure to secondhand smoke can result in heart disease in non-smoking adults.

Remember these tips to keep your home healthy:

- Improve air quality in your home so everyone can breathe easier
- Keep your home dry, clean, well-ventilated and free from smoke and chemicals
- Protect kids from exposure to indoor air pollution, especially second-hand smoke

Mark Your Calendar

CARE Share the Vision meetings are held at the Washington Park Family Center from 5:30—7:30 p.m. at the dates shown below. Dinner is provided. All are welcome.

Here are the dates for 2010:
April 22, June 24, Aug. 26,
Oct. 28, Dec. 23.

Mar. 27:

Brownfields Workshop
11:30 a.m.—2:30 p.m.
Location TBD

May 3:

Pollution and Your Health
(6 p.m., JTV Hill Center)
Hosted by Hillside Neighborhood