

## More Keys To Success

### Use U.S. EPA resources to build in-house expertise.

A Green Team leader can learn a lot about IAQ issues and be a good resource person and a motivator for the rest of your workforce, but leaders can't get results alone. Facility managers – whether they work inside or outside of your company – are directly responsible for technical factors affecting IAQ in the building they oversee.

Facility managers are usually well trained and knowledgeable about their building's operation, but they may not have extensive experience with IAQ issues. Green Team leaders can recommend resources to help your facility manager build IAQ knowledge and skills. Discussion with a Green Team representative can provide important IAQ orientation and background on a specific issue, as well as referrals to practical resources for dealing with IAQ problems.

The U.S. EPA has developed comprehensive, technically advanced resources for use by building managers. One of these is the 1991 publication *Building Air Quality – A Guide For Building Owners and Facility Managers*, which includes extensive background on IAQ issues, specific information about mitigating pollutants like mold, asbestos and radon, and a toolkit of forms to use in managing IAQ issues. This guidebook can be downloaded in PDF form, or ordered in print from the EPA, at no charge.

EPA also offers *I-BEAM (IAQ Building Education and Assessment Model)*, an advanced guide for building professionals and a comprehensive, state-of-the-art resource for managing IAQ in commercial

buildings. *I-BEAM* is an interactive resource with text, animation/visual, and interactive/calculation components that can be used to perform tasks including:

- Conducting an IAQ building audit
- Diagnosing and resolving IAQ related health problems
- Establishing an IAQ management and maintenance program to reduce IAQ risks
- Planning IAQ-compatible energy projects
- Protecting occupants from exposures to construction and renovation contaminants
- Calculating the cost, revenue, and productivity impacts of planned IAQ activities

*I-BEAM* can be downloaded online or ordered from the EPA on CD-ROM.

Because they work continuously with issues in their buildings, facility managers tend to have little time for out-of-house training but they may be inclined to learn about issues like IAQ using self-guiding media. A facilities person can pursue information as their schedule permits using references like EPA's *I-BEAM* and *Building Air Quality*.

EPA offers a number of other free downloadable IAQ publications; many of these are also available at nominal cost in booklet form. As IAQ awareness grows, your Green Team may want to build an IAQ resource library.

Websites for these and other publications are listed in [Resources](#), page 41.



## U.S. EPA Resources

- Free publications available at [www.usepa.gov/iaq](http://www.usepa.gov/iaq) can help improve IAQ for homes and schools, as well as in the workplace

## Establish a smoke-free workplace.

IAQ programs are insistent about keeping tobacco smoke out of the working environment. Smoking is now known to be a physical addiction, not just a habit. Breaking this kind of addiction is complicated by the need for smokers to modify routines they associate with smoking, such as taking a break for coffee or conversation while at work.

Businesses committed to fostering IAQ will do well to investigate options to support employees in behavioral or medical smoking cessation programs. This is a factor in which your workplace Green Team can join forces with Human Resources leadership to help support a healthier lifestyle as well as a healthier workplace environment for all.

## Show how improving IAQ saves money.

Investigating IAQ issues takes time. But a modest amount of time invested by Green Team members in efficient action can prevent a variety of possible losses. IAQ problems can easily result in sick days, decreased individual or group productivity, and increased health insurance claims. As with many green improvements, reasonable investment up front can yield significant savings and benefits over time.

Consider the value of IAQ improvements in relation to what your business pays to occupy your working space. Commercial rent may average \$20 per square foot and utility costs may add another \$2 to \$5 per square foot. The U.S. Green Building Council estimates typical personnel costs at about \$200 per square foot. People are a business's biggest investment! If pollutants in your workplace are impacting employee health and productivity, your business will lose money to IAQ problems.

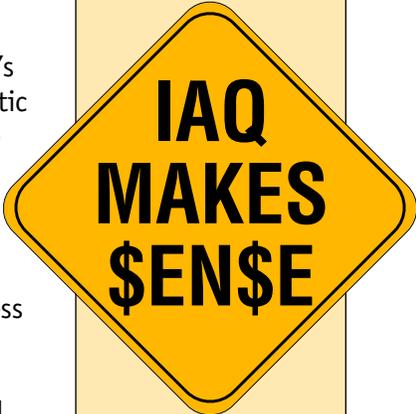
By contrast, a physically healthy working environment supports employee morale and is more likely to retain or even attract

talent. Employees who work together to solve a common environmental problem may transfer new skills to profitable business project problem solving.

To retain the support of your company's management, be efficient and systematic about investigations. Keep inquiries to the facts. Because co-workers are likely to be most candid and cooperative with one another, Green Team members can initially check into all IAQ issues. However, you must assess when an IAQ issue inquiry should be turned over to a qualified professional consultant. Recommend this additional investment to your superiors on the grounds that an expert can most cost-effectively complete a demanding inquiry and proceed with any necessary remediation measures.

Preventing problems is a wise cost control. Include IAQ improvement and protection strategies in remodeling plans, service contract negotiations and leasing agreements.

- **Think of making IAQ a priority in your workplace as a kind of health insurance for your company's work force and working environment**



**IAQ  
MAKES  
\$ENSE**

### Commercial Costs (average, per sq ft)

<b>Rent:</b>	<b>\$20</b>
<b>Utilities:</b>	<b>\$2-5</b>
<b>Personnel:</b>	<b>\$200</b>

- **Investment in IAQ invests in a healthy, productive work force!**

## Track changes and document results.

Tracking the outcomes of an IAQ improvement process can help make the case to the owners of your business for investing in more environmental health safeguards.

Are people feeling better? Are employees missing less work time? This kind of information is very valuable!

Write up a brief case study of your office IAQ improvement process. Ask a Human Resources professional to help formulate information to protect confidentiality.

USGBC and other organizations that advocate for healthy IAQ are actively seeking both qualitative and quantitative data on IAQ improvement measures.