

# IAQ Tools for Schools



## Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Program

Step-by-step guidance to improving the air quality in our nation's schools

### The Problem

Nearly 56 million people in the United States spend their days in elementary and secondary schools. According to the Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, in 1999, 43 percent of America's public schools—about 33,800—reported at least one unsatisfactory environmental condition (i.e., lighting, heating, ventilation, indoor air quality, acoustics or noise control, or physical security of the building). Approximately 25 percent of public schools reported that ventilation was unsatisfactory, while indoor air quality (IAQ) was reported to be unsatisfactory in about twenty percent of schools. Poor indoor air quality can impact the comfort and health of students and staff, which in turn can affect concentration, attendance, and student performance.

Schools that fail to respond promptly and effectively to poor IAQ run the risk of increased short-term health problems, such as fatigue and nausea, as well as long-term health problems like asthma. In serious cases, schools have been shut down and have had to move staff and students to temporary facilities. Delaying remediation of IAQ problems can also be costly and may even lead to liability claims and lawsuits that can damage a school's reputation. Clearly, IAQ issues are best addressed early and better still proactively.

### The Solution

The *IAQ Tools for Schools (IAQ TFS)* Program is a comprehensive resource that can help you maintain a healthy environment in your school buildings, by identifying, correcting, and preventing IAQ problems. The Kit is provided to schools at no cost and includes easy-to-follow checklists, videos, sample memos and policies, a recommended management plan, and a unique problem-solving wheel. Using the tools in the Kit, school officials can educate staff, students, and parents about the importance of good IAQ and their roles in ensuring a healthy, comfortable learning environment. Armed with the knowledge of good IAQ practices and commonsense preventive measures, schools can address most IAQ problems on their own. After

all, ensuring a healthy school environment is an investment in your students and staff.

To learn more about the *IAQ TFS* Kit and other resources available to you, visit EPA's Web site at [www.epa.gov/iaq/schools](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools), or order a free Kit by calling the IAQ INFO hotline at (800) 438-4318.

### Awards and Recognition

The *IAQ TFS* Awards Program provides incentives and public recognition to schools and school districts that are implementing the Kit. Three award categories are offered: *Great Start*, *Leadership*, and *Excellence*, each honoring schools and school districts as they progress through the various stages of the *IAQ TFS* Kit. Many school districts have been recognized for outstanding achievement and leadership in improving indoor air quality. See our Web site at [www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/awards](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/awards) for additional information and applications.

### Training and Networking Resources

Learn from the experts! Training and networking resources for schools managing IAQ issues are widely available. The *IAQ TFS* Program sponsors an annual Symposium, internet presentations, and offers specialized training on financing, communications, and facilities maintenance. See [www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/index.html) for additional information.

