



Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Program

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)

INDOOR AIR QUALITY TOOLS FOR SCHOOLS UPDATE

News & Events

- **Deadline Approaching: IAQ TFS National Awards Program:** The deadline to apply for EPA's [National Excellence Award](#) and [National Model of Sustained Excellence Award](#) is quickly approaching! Applications must be postmarked or e-mailed by September 12, 2008. Winners of these prestigious awards—EPA's highest honors in IAQ management—will be honored at the [IAQ TFS National Symposium](#) December 4-6, 2008, in Washington, DC.
- **Seven “Back to School” Tips for Kids with Asthma:** The [American Lung Association](#) recommends parents take [seven simple steps](#) to prepare children with asthma for the coming school year. Then, learn more about what school administrators, maintenance staff, and other school groups can do to [manage asthma in schools](#).
- **Nearby Flooding Can Affect the IAQ in Schools:** Mold can cause poor IAQ and have a significant health impact on children, especially those with asthma. In areas where flooding has occurred, buildings are particularly susceptible to mold growth. Learn about EPA's recommendations for [prevention and remediation of mold in schools](#).

[Back to Top](#)

Practicing IAQ TFS in Vocational Schools: It's Not a Technicality!

Let's face it: no school is immune to IAQ issues. Even healthy, high-performance school buildings must do regular maintenance, cleaning, inspection, and repairs to maintain healthy IAQ. But vocational schools may have increased numbers of pollutant sources that could affect IAQ, making them particularly vulnerable to poor indoor air quality. By adapting the IAQ TFS Program to their unique needs, vocational schools can ensure they are providing the healthiest learning environments for their students.

In fact, that is exactly what a Connecticut team did with their “[Tools for Techs](#)” supplement to the IAQ TFS checklists in the [Action Kit](#). The checklists were developed through a cooperative relationship among the Connecticut Department of Public Health, the Connecticut School Indoor Environment Resource Team, the Connecticut Technical High School System, the State Vocational Federation of Teachers/ American Federation of Teachers, and the UCONN Health Center's Center for Indoor Environments and Health. The “Tools for Techs” checklist packet helps vocational/ technical schools and the traditional schools that teach technologies identify and manage the additional pollutant sources inherent in specialty trade education. These include metal fumes from the welding shop, wood dust from the carpentry shop, or chemical vapor from the cosmetology teaching area. The Connecticut Technical High School System used the checklists when they launched their successful IAQ management program. As one shop teacher explained: “Our school is essentially a mini industrial complex because so many of our classrooms are devoted to teaching the trades. The “Tools for Techs”

checklists helped us identify strategies that can reduce the potentially hazardous emissions in our school." [Download](#) the "Tools for Techs" checklist packet (PDF).

Although vocational schools must be particularly aware of additional sources of potential pollutants, *all* schools can take their efforts further to ensure the healthiest air for children: the [Schools Chemical Cleanout Campaign](#) helps schools reduce the number of chemicals in their classrooms that contribute to poor IAQ. And, the [Clean School Bus USA](#) program helps schools reduce the amount of diesel exposure that the 24 million student bus riders encounter every school day.

How are you taking your efforts further to maintain healthy IAQ in your school? Let us know! Send an e-mail to IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com.

[Back to Top](#)

Checklist

It's that time of year! Now that August is upon us, it's time to dust off those books and desks in the classroom and get thinking about indoor air quality. Use these tips to reinvigorate your IAQ management routine at the start of the school year.

- Leave plug-in air fresheners or other indoor "perfumes" at home.** These smell nice, but the constant release of harsh chemicals can cause headaches, nausea, and even trigger asthma attacks. Learn more about [common asthma triggers](#).
- Do walkthroughs of every classroom to make IAQ a priority from the beginning of the year.** Use the [IAQ TfS checklists](#) to get started.
- Remind parents what your school does to ensure a healthy learning environment for their children.** Communicate your efforts with a letter, e-mail, or Web site update. Consider creating an online group for parents to ask questions or discuss environmental health in your school or district.
- Identify asthmatic students.** Make sure they have Asthma Action Plans on file with the school nurse. [Download](#) a sample Asthma Action Plan and share it with parents.

[Back to Top](#)

Tell Us What You Think

Is there a topic you want to see covered in an *IAQ TfS* Update? Need more information or have a quick question? Send us an e-mail at IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com.

[Back to Top](#)

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If you would like more information about any of the topics discussed in this Update or would like to **subscribe** to EPA's *IAQ TfS* Updates, please send an e-mail to IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com.

The **IAQ TfS Program** is a comprehensive resource to help schools maintain a healthy environment in school buildings by identifying, correcting, and preventing IAQ problems. Learn more about the *IAQ TfS* Program at www.epa.gov/iaq/schools.

[Back to Top](#)



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