

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Questions & Answers (Q&A)

1. I am in an older room with two ventilation systems located just under the windows on the exterior walls. Should I open the windows?

Yes, depending upon the outdoor conditions. Older campuses equipped "unit ventilators" (UVs) only recycle room air. These units rely on opening windows to supply "fresh or makeup" air into the room. Whenever conditions permit, opening windows near the UVs will help circulate "fresh" outdoor air throughout the classroom or office area.

2. What is covered under the Texas Mold Assessment and Remediation Rules (TMARR)?

TMARR (25 TAC §§295.301-295.338) contains requirements for the licensing and registration of persons performing mold assessments and mold remediation, requirements for the accreditation of mold training providers, minimum work standards for the conduct of mold assessments and remediation by licensed and registered persons, a code of ethics, and penalties. The TMARR requirements are required for mold contamination of 25 contiguous square feet or more.

3. What can Environmental Programs do for me?

Environmental Programs personnel can and does:

- investigate odors and sources of moisture,
- develop work orders to address the finding of IAQ investigations,
- collect temperature, relative humidity levels and carbon monoxide levels (over time) within troubled areas,
- assist (along with Operations and campus staff) drying out flooded / high moisture areas, etc. Unless directed by Risk Management, Environmental Programs does not collect air-borne or bulk mold samples.

4. Can I clean-up small amounts of mildew (mold)?

Yes. Mild soap and water can be used to clean mildew (mold) off of non-porous (e.g., steel) material. Porous items (e.g., cardboard boxes, paper and ceiling tile, etc.) with mold should be disposed of. Semi-porous material (e.g., gypsum wall-board, wood, etc.) can often be cleaned by:

- isolating the area and donning you protective clothing (such as disposable and/or chemical resistant gloves),
- clean the area with a mild soap solution,
- treat the area with a biocide (e.g., Triad III) and provide a minimum contact time (e.g., 10 minutes for Triad III) before rinsing
- as needed rinse and dry the area,
- discard waste in a sealed plastic bag, and
- wash your hands and face.

5. Can I use bleach to kill mold?

Straight bleach should not (normally) be used to kill mold (Bleach is highly corrosive to the eyes, irritation to the lungs and skin and reacts with most household cleaners, especially ammonia).

However, a "bleach solution" (often used as a disinfectant in food service) does kill mold.

Information from a consumer response specialist at the Clorox Company (www.clorox.com) in 2005 stated that they recommend 3/4 cup of bleach to 1 gallon of water; apply and let sit for 10

minutes, and then rinse. Bleach solution should always be used with good ventilation and personal protective equipment (e.g., chemical resistant gloves and goggles). Never mix cleaning chemicals, especially with bleach or bleach solution. Don't forget to label you bleach solution ("Bleach Solution" Corrosive to Eyes / Irritant").