

June is Healthy Homes Month! We all love our

families and try to do the best for their health and happiness. But did you know that your home might have hidden dangers to your children's health?

Ask Yourself:

- Do your children have breathing problems like asthma?
- Is someone in your home allergic to mold?
- Do you know the signs of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning?
- Do you feel ill when using household chemicals or pesticides?
- Finding pest in your home?



Indoor Air Quality can be unhealthy if it has too many pollutants. Air pollutants can be many things - from oven cleaner to cigarette smoke and e-cigs vapor to mold. Asthma, allergies and chronic respiratory issues have a lot to do with the air you breathe. So, what can we do to protect ourselves and our children? Well practical application of right information goes a long way in helping protect human health!

Asthma:

Warning Signs of an Asthma Attack: tightness in the chest, shortness of breath, wheezing and coughing.

No one knows what causes asthma. Lots of things can trigger an asthma attack, some triggers are things that people are allergic to. Common triggers are pollen from trees and flowers, dander from pets, dust, mold, carbon monoxide (CO), cleaning products, personal care products and fecal matter of pest such as roaches, rodents and dust mites.

Figure out what triggers you or your child's asthma. Identifying the problem is the first step to addressing it.

HELP YOURSELF TO A HEALTHY HOME!

Healthy Housekeeping:

Clean your home often. Don't let dust accumulate and keep the clutter to a minimum. This makes surfaces easier to wipe down and dust.

When possible don't have carpeting or rugs. Hard wood floors and tiles are much easier to keep dust free. Carpets and rugs can trap and resuspend microscopic particles into the air. If you do have carpet or rugs, vacuum often. We suggest using a vacuum with a HEPA (High Efficiency Particle Air) Filter. Don't forget to follow directions and change the filter at the recommended times.

Use plastic covers for mattresses and pillows. This helps keep down dust mites. Wash all bedding every week in hot water with temperature above 130F to kill dust mites.

Control Pests. Roaches and rodents need food, water, warmth and shelter to survive. You can control these pests and deter them from making a home in your home, by denying them the necessities.

Here are some tips on integrated pest management (IPM).

- Store food in tightly sealed container.
- Clean up crumbs and spills right away.
- Empty garbage often, use garbage cans with tight fitting lids and do not store garbage containers up against the home.
- Wash dirty dishes after eating.
- Don't leave out pet food and water over night.
- Fix plumbing leaks and drips.
- Seal cracks where roaches and other bugs hide or get into home.
- Don't collect a trash pile on the property. This makes a perfect home for pest!

Mold and Moisture:

Mold can have many colors and grows in wet and damp places both inside and outside. Mold produces: “spores”, tiny specks you can’t see and that float through the air. When you breathe in mold spores, they can get into your lungs, causing health problems. Places you can find mold is in bathrooms (around shower or tub and on the walls, ceilings or floor), wet or damp basements and crawlspaces, bathroom and kitchen sinks, attics with leaking roofs, wet clothing that is not dried, windows and walls where condensation collects, wallpaper or carpet and in air conditioners.

There are many ways to address mold in the home from full home remodeling and wood treatment to landscaping to good housekeeping, but we will address the things you can do now in your home.

- Repair leaking roofs, walls, door or windows immediately.
- Keep surfaces, floors and walls clean and dry.
- Wipe down shower walls with squeegee or towel after bathing.
- Run a fan that is vented to the outside while bathing or showering.
- Run a fan that is vented to the outside while cooking
- When using air condition use the “auto fan” setting.
- Check the relative humidity in your home. You can buy a kit or monitor at most electronic or hardware stores. Stop running your humidifier if the reading is more than 50%. If your home has a high reading of humidity above 50% using a dehumidifier will help remove the excess moisture.
- Use storm windows to prevent condensation.
- You can use bleach to kill mold. Follow directions posted on EPA.gov or HUD.gov
- DO NOT MIX CHLORINE BLEACH WITH AMMONIA!

Carbon Monoxide:

You can’t see, feel, taste or smell carbon monoxide (CO). This deadly gas can make you very sick or even kill you. But where does it come from? There are more sources than you may believe. We all know of gas appliances like ovens, stoves and dryers but what about wood-burning fireplaces and stoves? Gas and oil furnaces, boilers, and water heaters, space heaters, gas grills and charcoal grills, recreational vehicles, tobacco smoke, house fires, gas and propane powered equipment, blocked chimneys and flues are all examples of CO sources.

Signs of CO Poisoning:

- Headache/Dizziness
- Nausea/Vomiting
- Confusion/Tiredness
- Tightness in chest/Trouble Breathing
- Weakness
- Unconsciousness/Death

Steps to Keep Your Family Safe:

- Never use grills or run engines inside your home, garage or basement even for a short time.
- Never warm up your vehicle in the garage.
- Have a heating contractor check your furnace, chimney and other sources of CO every fall to make sure everything is okay.
- Always follow instructions carefully when using unvented kerosene or gas heaters or a vent free gas fireplace, open a window and DO NOT USE WHILE SLEEPING!
- Make sure you turn off appliances fully once no longer in use.
- Never block or disconnect an exhaust vent
- Keep all wood, paper, cloth and combustibles away from heating appliances.
- Install a Carbon Monoxide Alarm and should your alarm go off leave the building immediately and call 9-1-1.

Education and maintenance are the best prevention methods and they save lives!

Pesticides and Household Chemicals:

Exposure to household chemicals, such as pesticides, may cause harm to humans, pets or the environment, if not used properly. These may cause a range of effects from mild dizziness and nausea to injury of the lungs and damage to the nervous, reproductive and immune systems.

- If Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices don't work for your home, make sure to always read the label when applying pesticides or any home product.
- Use pesticides safely, open a window and vent the area properly.
- Wear protective clothing and do not mix products.
- Keep children and pets away while using any type hazardous product.
- Always put the cap back on and put the product away and out of children's reach.
- You can reach your local poison control center by calling 1-800-222-1222 from anywhere in the country.
- Buy *Syrup of Ipecac* at your local drugstore to have on hand. This medicine will make a person throw up. **ONLY USE THIS MEDICINE WHEN DIRECTED BY A DOCTOR OR POSION CONTROL CENTER TELLS YOU. SOMETIMES THROWING UP MAKES THE POSIONING WORSE.**
- Safely dispose of product when done. Take leftovers to a community hazardous waste collection point. Do not put in trash or dump in the yard.

PEORIA TRIBE

ENVIRONMENTAL DEPARTMENT

