



The Center for Indoor Environments and Health at the UCONN Health Center has worked with school districts and State and Local Health Departments to improve the environment where the school building's

condition has contributed to occupants experiencing concerning health symptoms.

**Our services include guidance on:**

- managing the problem and communicating the risk to the school community,
- tracking and evaluating the students' and staff health symptoms,
- assessing the building for causes of poor indoor air quality, and
- advising on engineering and technical resources that reduce the risk of health symptoms.

Our knowledge and perspective on the problems school communities face results not only from our consulting experience directly with school districts, but from our work for and with federal and state agencies.

Programs have included guidance on the Environmental Protection Agency Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools program, support to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health developing a dampness checklist tool, trainings customized for school nurses on illness and school environments, and

guidance for clinicians on addressing health effects relating to mold/moisture in the indoor environment.

We were invited by the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering to participate in a critical review of indoor air pollution in schools requested by the Environment Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly that became a basis for the Indoor Air Quality in Schools Legislation passed in 2003.

**WHO WE ARE**

The Center for Indoor Environments and Health staff includes:

- **Paula Schenck, MPH** - an environmental health specialist who directs the Center's programs with strengths in environmental strategy and communications,
- **Marc Croteau, MD, MPH** - an occupational medicine specialist who evaluates patients in the UConn Occupational Medicine Diagnostic Clinic,
- **Paul Bureau, MS, CIH** - an experienced hygienist who evaluates indoor environments,
- **Robert DeBernardo, MD, MBA, MPH** - an affiliated allergist who brings expertise on disease prevention, allergy and indoor exposures,
- **Eileen Storey, MD, MPH** - an occupational physician and UConn professor emeritus who provides guidance on educational programs.

# INDOOR AIR QUALITY FOR SCHOOLS AND OFFICES

## PROBLEM SOLVING CHECKLIST OF SERVICES

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### 1. Overall problem assessment

- ✓ Develop strategy for building/school indoor air quality program
- ✓ Assess alternatives
- ✓ Review and comment on remediation plans, specifically regarding impact to occupants and their health symptoms
- ✓ Provide education and specialized training on indoor air quality and health

### 2. Health assessment

- ✓ Provide guidance on managing and tracking occupant symptom complaints
- ✓ Review, organize and interpret health information available from health personnel
- ✓ Interview building occupants -children and adults- about o health symptoms and building-related patterns and trends
- ✓ Conduct and evaluate office worker and teacher health surveys
- ✓ Provide respiratory testing at the building (in conjunction with health surveys)
- ✓ Consult to community physicians on environmental aspects

***Clinical evaluations for individuals with concerns over building-related illness are available at the UConn Health Center, Occupational and Environmental Medicine Clinic (860) 679-2893***

### 3. Building assessment

- ✓ Identify environmental factors and possible exposures that contribute to illness risk
- ✓ Industrial hygiene visit and walk-through assessment
- ✓ Review of industrial hygiene and engineering data
- ✓ Develop report with recommendations

### 4. Remediation planning and oversight

- ✓ Recommend interventions
- ✓ Provide guidance on protecting occupants from exposures during construction
- ✓ Coordinate services from other specialized resources

### 5. Risk Communication

- ✓ Develop risk communication strategy
- ✓ Consult to community physicians including pediatricians
- ✓ Participate in educational forums for the office/school community
- ✓ Coordinate communication among local health directors, State Departments of Public Health, Labor, Environmental Protection and Education (as appropriate)
- ✓ Facilitate communications on health concerns among appropriate parties that may include: building owners and operators, employers, occupants, contractors the public/communities, school communities -district and school personnel, teachers, parents and students

### 6. Tools for Schools

- ✓ Connecticut Indoor Air Quality Resource Team Trainings
- ✓ Participate in Environmental Protection Agency's Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools **School Health and Indoor Environments Leadership Development Summit** program