Seven Statistics on Indoor Air Quality

Everything from mold, to cigarette smoke, to chemicals, and even carbon monoxide from a malfunctioning heating system, can make indoor air quality unpleasant at minimum and deadly at worst. Here are seven statistics relating to indoor air quality:

1. **Three** common causes of poor indoor air quality are improperly or inadequately maintained heating and ventilation systems; contamination of air by chemicals, glues, paints, etc; and insufficient intake of fresh outdoor air.
2. **Nine** health-related symptoms related to poor air quality in a workplace include eye, nose and throat irritation; fatigue; headache; shortness of breath; allergies; coughing/sneezing; sinus congestion; dizziness; and nausea.
3. **One** sign that your workplace has an air quality issue is that you feel healthier hours after leaving work; such as on a day off—and physically worse a few hours after returning to work.
4. A recent heating system malfunction at a label-printing plant in North Royalton, OH, sent **13**people to hospital for treatment of carbon monoxide poisoning.
5. **Three** unsuitable locations for outdoor air intakes that can result in pollution being sucked into a building are loading bays, parking garages and cooling tower enclosures.
6. **Six** essential elements of a preventive maintenance program to ensure good indoor air quality include regular inspections of all critical components of the ventilation system; regular inspections for conditions such as water leaks or stagnant water pools that would promote the growth of micro-organisms; correction of any deficiencies found; repair or replacement of malfunctioning components, such as filters and belts, and cleaning of air distribution systems, ducts and dampers; adequate treatment of open-water systems associated with ventilation systems, such as cooling towers

and humidifiers; and maintenance of furnaces, space heaters and water heaters to ensure proper burning and exhausting of waste gases.

7. **Three** situations which should trigger an indoor air quality investigation are: complaints from workers; substantial increases in building occupancy; and building renovations that involve significant changes to the ventilation system.