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How to Purchase a Healthy Home

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HOW TO PURCHASE A HEALTHY HOME

Indoor Air Quality Assessment Checklist

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- Do you have any unvented combustion appliances?
- Do any household members smoke in your house?
- Do any furry pets live indoors?
- Do you have any house plants?
- Do you park your cars in an attached garage?
- Do household members do: woodworking, gluing, jewelry or pottery making, painting, soldering, welding, photography, or model building inside the house?
- Is part of your living area below ground?
- Is your house insulated with asbestos?
- Are heating vents corroded or rusted?
- Do burner flames on gas heating or cooking appliances appear yellow instead of blue?
- Do you have water leakage in your basement?
- Are unusual and noticeable odors in your house?
- Is the moisture noticeable on windows or other surfaces?
- Does the air seem stale?
- Are any of the following symptoms noticeable among residents: headaches, itchy or watery eyes, nose or throat infection or dryness, dizziness, nausea, colds, or sinus problems?
- Is the house unusually warm or cold?
- Is there a noticeable lack of air movement?
- Is dust on furniture noticeable?
- Is dust or dirt staining walls, ceilings, furniture, or draperies?
- Have you weatherized your home recently?
- Is any family member less than 4 or more than 60 years old?
- Is anyone normally confined to the house more than 12 hours per day?
- Does anyone have asthma, bronchitis, allergies, heart problems, or hypersensitivity pneumonitis?
- Does anyone in the household often wake up in the morning with a headache?



If you answered “yes” to 10 or more answers, you may have poor indoor air quality. To improve the quality of your home’s air, ask yourself if you can change any of your “yes” answers to “no.”

Following are some additional suggestions:

- ✓ Use a vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter and clean carpets often.
- ✓ To remove dust, clean hard floors with a damp mop, and wipe window sills with a damp cloth often.

- ✓ Clean up crumbs and spills in the kitchen right away.
- ✓ Check all combustion appliances to make sure they vent to the outdoors. Make sure your gas appliances, furnace and wood burning stove all have yearly checkups.
- ✓ Test your home for radon.
- ✓ Find out if your home has lead based paints or lead in the water. You may need to have your home, soil or water tested.
- ✓ Don't try to remove lead-based paints or asbestos on your own.

Sources: *Your Home's Health: Indoor Air Quality Assessment* and *Help Yourself to a Healthy Home: Protect Your Children's Health*. Funding for this brochure from Healthy Indoor Air for America's Homes: CSREES, EPA, MSU.

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