



Indoor Air Quality and Personal Exposure Assessment Program

This page updated March 24, 2003

Sources and Potential Health Effects of Indoor Air Pollutants		
Pollutant	Major Indoor Sources	Potential Health Effects*
Environmental Tobacco Smoke	Cigarettes, cigars, and pipes	Respiratory irritation, bronchitis and pneumonia in children, emphysema, lung cancer, and heart disease
Carbon Monoxide	Unvented or malfunctioning gas appliances, wood stoves, and tobacco smoke	Headache; nausea; angina; impaired vision and mental functioning; fatal at high concentrations
Nitrogen Oxides	Unvented or malfunctioning gas appliances	Eye, nose, and throat irritation; increased respiratory infections in children
Organic Chemicals	Aerosol sprays, solvents, glues, cleaning agents, pesticides, paints, moth repellents, air fresheners, drycleaned clothing, and treated water	Eye, nose, and throat irritation; headaches; loss of coordination; damage to liver, kidney and brain; various types of cancer
Formaldehyde	Pressed wood products such as plywood and particleboard; furnishings; wallpaper; durable press fabrics	Eye, nose, and throat irritation; headache; allergic reactions; cancer
Respirable Particles	Cigarettes, wood stoves, fireplaces, aerosol sprays, and house dust	Eye, nose and throat irritation; increased susceptibility to respiratory infections and bronchitis; lung cancer
Biological Agents (Bacteria, Viruses, Fungi, Animal Dander, Mites)	House dust; pets; bedding; poorly maintained air conditioners, humidifiers and dehumidifiers; wet or moist structures; furnishings	Allergic reactions; asthma; eye, nose, and throat irritation; humidifier fever, influenza, and other infectious diseases
Asbestos	Damaged or deteriorating insulation, fireproofing, and acoustical materials	Asbestosis, lung cancer, mesothelioma, and other cancers
Lead	Sanding or open-flame burning of lead paint; house dust	Nerve and brain damage, particularly in children; anemia; kidney damage; growth retardation
Radon	Soil under buildings, some earth-derived construction materials, and groundwater	Lung cancer
* Depends on factors such as the amount of pollutant inhaled, the duration of exposure and susceptibility of the individual exposed.		

[Decisions Pending and Opportunities for Public Participation](#)
[Conditions of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Accessibility](#)
[How to Request Public Records](#)

The Board is one of five boards, departments, and offices under the umbrella of the California Environmental Protection Agency.
[Cal/EPA](#) | [ARB](#) | [DPR](#) | [DTSC](#) | [OEHHA](#) | [SWRCB](#)

