



Recycling and
Environmental
Action
Planning
Society

Greening Your Office

Tips by Email

Attention: **Office Staff**
Date: **August 2011**

From: **REAPS**
Phone: **250-561-7327**

GREEN TIP #16 :

Indoor Air Quality

Poor indoor air quality is one of the key elements for a sick building. Sick Building Syndrome is a temporary sensitivity to chemicals and symptoms that disappear when one is no longer exposed to the toxin. Symptoms include irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, dry skin, lethargy, difficulty in concentrating, headaches, dizziness and nausea. More severe symptoms include asthma, menstrual problems, skin irritations, fainting, insomnia, memory lapse, diarrhea, vomiting, upset stomach, nosebleeds, vision problems, fatigue and muscle aches and pains.

Poor indoor air quality may be the result of inadequacies of your office's ventilation or emissions of volatile organics and other chemicals from office equipment (e.g. printers, photocopiers, etc.) and furnishings (e.g. carpets, partitions, paints, furniture, etc.). Commonly found office pollutants and their sources include smoking (people still smoke in the stairwells of some office buildings); asbestos from insulating and fire-retardant building supplies; formaldehyde from pressed wood products; other organics from building materials, carpet, and other office furnishings, cleaning materials and activities, restroom air fresheners, paints, adhesives, copying machines, and photography and print shops; biological contaminants from dirty ventilation systems or water-damaged walls, ceilings, and carpets; and pesticides from pest management practices.

TIPS



Choose untreated, natural carpeting and flooring



Try not to use glues, sealants and paints that emit volatile chemicals in the office



Have lots of plants in your office, especially those that remove toxins and purify the air. Plants also absorb carbon dioxide and emit oxygen. Plants will make your office more attractive as well



Put printers and copiers in a separate room from staff. Ensure this room is well ventilated with its own ventilation system if possible



Conduct routine indoor air quality monitoring

Any Questions or Suggestions? Call or Email us! 250 561 7327 or green_solutions@reaps.org

Recycling & Environmental Action Planning Society (R.E.A.P.S.)
PO Box 444, Prince George, BC V2L 4S6 (250)561-7327 (ph) (250)561-7324 (f)
Website: <http://www.reaps.org>