



Helping Kids Learn in a Pollution Free Environment

Healthy Schools: Planning for the 20-21 School Year

Reopening Schools – The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and EPA [Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools and Homes](#) requires all of us to move forward by practicing social distancing and other [daily habits](#) to reduce our risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19.

Cleaning and disinfecting public spaces like schools will require you to:

- develop your plan;
- implement your plan; and
- maintain and revise your plan.

EPA's latest guidance and frequently asked questions about COVID-19, including topics such as disinfectants and indoor air concerns, can be found on the [EPA coronavirus website](#).

As your custodial and facilities staff ramp up cleaning and disinfecting protocols, keep these principles in mind:

- Verify that your disinfectant product is on EPA's list of [Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2](#), the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Train cleaning/maintenance staff on cleaning products, protocols and procedures.
- Always read and follow product labels. CDC guidance for cleaning and disinfection for community facilities emphasizes extra focus on high touch surfaces, common areas, and shared electronic equipment.
- Use the EPA and CDC [Cleaning and Disinfecting Decision Tool](#)

More CDC Guidance Websites

[Child Care, Schools, Youth Programs](#)

[FAQs for Administrators, Teachers, and Parents](#)



Learning Links—Education Resources

[National Parks](#)

[U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#)

[U. S. United States Department of Agriculture](#)

[New Children's Museum](#)

[Kids Quest Children's Museum](#)

[Children's Museum of Atlanta](#)

Maintaining Healthy Indoor Environments in Schools

Indoor air quality, or IAQ, is an important part of healthy school environments. As you would at any time, employ the strategies in [EPA's IAQ Tools for Schools](#) and [IAQ Tools for Schools Preventive Maintenance](#). These documents give you tips on:

- Routine HVAC Systems Maintenance:
- Ensure school HVAC systems are operating properly, with outdoor ventilation air maintained at or above design minimum values.
- Employ filtration and gas-phase air cleaning strategies to further improve IAQ, in conjunction with source control strategies.

- Change filters regularly and ensure condensate pans are draining.

Communications: Develop a communications plan with a clear process for addressing occupant concerns. Share your IAQ preventive maintenance program's intent, activities, results, and next steps with your entire school community.

Staff Training: IAQ Tools for Schools Webinars provide school district staff with the knowledge needed to start, improve or sustain an IAQ management program. View the [web-based trainings](#).

Maintaining or Restoring Water Quality in Buildings with Low or No Use

Many schools have not been occupied for a long time. Reduced water use over weeks or months can lead to stagnant water inside plumbing, which can become unsafe to drink or use.

EPA recommends taking [proactive steps](#) to protect your students and staff. Minimize water stagnation during closures, and address building water quality before you reopen. EPA guidance:

- [Maintaining or Restoring Water Quality in Buildings with Low or No Use](#)
- [Checklist: Restoring Water Quality in Buildings for Reopening](#)



Indoor Air and Coronavirus (COVID-19)

COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person-to-person. However, some uncertainty remains about the relative importance of different routes of transmission of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). There is growing evidence that this virus can remain airborne for longer times and further distances than originally thought. In addition to close contact with infected people and contaminated surfaces, there is a possibility that spread of COVID-19 may also occur via airborne particles in indoor environments, in some circumstances beyond the 2 m (about 6 ft) range encouraged by social distancing recommendations. See [Science and Technical Resources related to Indoor Air and Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) or [Indoor Air and COVID-19 Key References and Publications](#) for technical information.

However, there are straightforward steps that can be taken to reduce potential airborne transmission of COVID-19 and the focus of this material is on those measures. The layout and design of a building, as well as occupancy and type of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system, can all impact potential airborne spread of the virus. Although improvements to ventilation and air cleaning cannot on their own eliminate the risk of airborne transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, EPA recommends precautions to reduce the potential for airborne transmission of the virus. These precautions include increasing ventilation with outdoor air and air filtration as part of a larger strategy that includes social distancing, wearing cloth face coverings or masks, [surface cleaning and disinfecting](#), handwashing, and other precautions. By themselves, measures to reduce airborne exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19 are not enough since airborne transmission is not the only way exposure to SARS-CoV-2 could potentially occur.

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**REGISTER
NOW!**

**Let's Clear the Air:
Using Ventilation Practices to
Promote Healthy IAQ in Schools**

Register for this webinar to hear about strategies for operating and maintaining efficient HVAC systems to provide clean and healthy air in schools. You will learn how to apply findings from scientific research and guidance on ventilation to reduce the spread of viruses and bacteria using comprehensive IAQ plans and practices.

Thursday, August 6, 2020 | 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. EDT

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**REGISTER
NOW!**

**Cleaning for Health:
Proactive Plans to Effectively
Clean and Promote Healthy IAQ in Schools**

Register for this webinar to learn how to tailor your cleaning and maintenance plan and procedures to help implement cleaning guidance for schools and reduce the spread of viruses and bacteria. You also will hear about strategies for training staff and building a capable, committed team to effectively implement robust procedures focused on cleaning for health, as well as CDC's [Considerations for Schools guidance](#).

Thursday, August 13, 2020 | 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. EDT

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**REGISTER
NOW!**

**What Schools Need to Know:
Practices and Principles for Healthy
IAQ and Reducing the Spread of Viruses**

Register for this webinar to hear about strategies for developing a proactive, comprehensive IAQ management plan to help implement guidance specific to schools and prevent the spread of viruses and bacteria. You will learn how to identify key IAQ considerations that address a range of critical areas related to controlling the spread of diseases in schools, including ventilation, filtration and air cleaning, cleaning/disinfection of high-contact surfaces, personal protective equipment (PPE), social distancing, and managing special spaces (e.g., toilets, sick rooms).

EPA Region 6— South Central

1201 Elm Street
Suite 500
Dallas, Texas 75270

EPA Region 6 Children's Health Team

Paula Selzer, Children's Environmental Health
Coordinator
Selzer.paula@epa.gov;
214 665-6663

Cathy Gilmore, SEE for Healthy Schools
Newsletter
Gilmore.cathy@epa.gov
214 665-6574

Protecting human health and the
environment.



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[Special thanks to EPA Region 10-Pacific Northwest for allowing EPA Region 6-South Central to use articles from its Healthy Schools News for the Pacific Northwest.](#)

In our next issue, the Region 6 Healthy Schools Newsletter in September will highlight the following, in addition to the quarterly columns on Notes for Nurses, Custodian's Closet, and Learning Links:

- Children's Health Month,
- Pollution Prevention Week, and
- America Recycles Day.

Healthy Schools is published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 6 - South Central in Dallas, Texas. Region 6 includes the states of Arkansas,

Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas as well as 66 Tribes. For general information about Healthy Schools, to provide feedback on this newsletter, or to be added or removed from the distribution list, please contact Cathy Gilmore, Senior Environmental Employee (SEE) for Healthy Schools at Gilmore.cathy@epa.gov

We would love your Feedback on this newsletter or suggestions for future topics. Please email EPA at Gilmore.cathy@epa.gov.

The EPA has many opportunities to increase the safety and sustainability of your school. Please contact us to schedule a live webinar on any of the subjects below:

Sustainable Management of Food: It's important now more than ever for all of us to not waste food. Learn how our food choices impact the environment and how we can reduce food waste and save money.

Stephen Sturdivant, Sturdivant.stephen@epa.gov, 214-665-6673

Recycling: Recycling, along with reduction and reuse, is a great way for your students to participate in your sustainability goals. By providing increased access to recycling receptacles and awareness of recycling best practices, you can reduce your waste and your carbon footprint.

Deanna Debose, debose.deanna@epa.gov, 214-665-6762

Safer Choice: Developed to give consumers an easy way to choose products with safer chemical ingredients, the Safer Choice label indicates that a chemical product has met the EPA's rigorous standards for safety, which means the products are better both for the environment and human health.

Whitney Lehrer, lehrer.whitney@epa.gov, 214-665-6553

Lead Based Paint: The Renovation, Repair, and Painting (RRP) Rule helps protect children from exposure to lead based paint dust caused by renovation and repairs conducted in a building built prior to 1978. Our lead-based paint program is here to help answer questions and to provide guidance on the regulation and removal.

Mikeal Adams, adams.mikeal@epa.gov, 214-665-6711

Integrated Pest Management: The Region 6 Contact for the Integrated Pest Management Program under Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) is Ken McPherson, mcpherson.kenneth@epa.gov, 214 665-6754.

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