



A Union of Professionals

WORK SHOULDN'T HURT

Indoor Environmental Quality Action Plan

Spend some time thinking about your workplace. What are some of the things you hope to accomplish when you go back? Consider the following questions:

1. What do you see as the three most pressing problems relating to IEQ?

2. Who will you ask to help you address these problems?

3. How will you collect information about these problems?

4. How will you communicate information to your local leaders, co-workers, and management?

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of 1.7 million professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

Randi Weingarten
PRESIDENT

Fedrick C. Ingram
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Evelyn DeJesus
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



5. What IEQ policies are already in place within your workplace?

6. What IEQ policies would you like to see put in place, in order of priority?

Indoor Environmental Quality Action Plan

Some suggestions for developing a plan of action at your workplace include:

- Establish a health and safety committee, either with a coordinator, and members such as administrators, facility managers, health professionals, maintenance, and others, or a union only committee if you can't get a broader committee established.
- Distribute checklists for staff to survey their areas, identify problems (ex: moldy ceiling tile, stale air) report health symptoms and reinforce any existing policies (e.g., use only approved cleaners, don't block air vents, food policies, etc.)
- Review the surveys and conduct a walkthrough of the building. Committees may consider inviting someone from their union who has more expertise or a state or local agency that can provide technical assistance.
- Prioritize repairs, maintenance issues, training needs, and recommend policies that will improve environmental conditions and air quality.
- Help to establish a timetable for short-term improvements and a process for responding to the more expensive remedies.
- Communicate the committee's findings and recommendations with local leaders, staff, administration, and others.
- Monitor conditions with a follow-up action plan. Help develop a process to respond to complaints and evaluate effectiveness of the policies or procedures.
- Celebrate victories but keep meeting on a regular basis.

Employees with work-related health problems should document this with their health care provider. You may be able to file a grievance, a claim for workers' compensation benefits, or, if your condition permanently disables you, a claim for accidental disability retirement. Don't just quit; talk to your union representative about your options. For more information, contact the AFT health and safety team at 4healthandsafety@aft.org