

PROMOTING HEALTHY SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Tips for Staff and Teachers

Avoid using chemicals. Use only the approved “green” cleaner for small cleaning needs in your classroom. Don't bring in your own bug spray; it's against the law.¹ Use odorless, water-based markers and art supplies. *Personal fragrances and chemicals can be respiratory irritants.*

Make sure your air vents are working and not blocked with books and supplies. Locate the vents in your room – sometimes under a window. Keep furniture a few feet away from air vents – so air can flow. *Report dirty or noisy vents.*

If you have students with known allergies or asthma you should avoid bringing pets into the classroom. *Pets with fur or feathers have dander which are significant allergic asthma triggers.*

Be aware that plants have spores and their soil can breed mold. *These are allergens.*

Create a “crumb- and spill -free” classroom with an eating and cleaning plan. Store extra food *well*, in a lid tight container. Have a designated covered trash can for food garbage. Crumbs and liquids attract pests. *Report any signs of pests in the integrated pest management IPM log.*

Reduce classroom clutter such as paper and old classroom projects you aren't using. They collect dust and harbor pests. *Include students in activities such as clean-ups and recycling to promote school pride and environmental stewardship.*

Report water leaks as soon as they appear. Mold can grow if wet places don't dry within 48 hours.² *Your school has a work order system to report and track needed repairs.*



This factsheet was developed by the MassCOSH Healthy Schools Initiative. For more information on managing asthma and improving indoor air quality in your school, contact: Tolle Graham at tolle.graham@masscosh.org and Al Vega at al.vega@masscosh.org

Sources: ¹The Children's and Family Protection <http://massnrc.org/ipm/index.html>

²Mold, The Environmental Protection Agency <https://www.epa.gov/mold/mold-course-chapter-4>