



Indoor Air Quality



Dust & Contaminants

Testing for dust and chemical contaminants is difficult, expensive, and often inaccurate. As an energy consultant, Peaceful Existence does not test for the presence of airborne or waterborne contaminants. What we can do is provide you with some important information and resources to help you learn more and keep your home safe and clean.

The easiest way to control dust in your home is to change furnace filters regularly and run the air handler fan more often if not continuously. Every thermostat has a fan setting for "AUTO" which turns on the fan only when the heating or air conditioning system is running, and "ON" which runs the fan continuously. The fan in your furnace was designed to handle continuous use and does not consume excessive amounts of electricity when running efficiently. In fact, running your fan more often may actually lower your heating and air conditioning bills by ensuring that the air in your home is uniformly mixed.

Organic chemicals are widely used as ingredients in household products. Paints, varnishes, and wax all contain organic solvents, as do many cleaning, disinfecting, cosmetic, degreasing, and hobby products. Fuels are made up of organic chemicals. All of these products can release organic compounds while you are using them, and, to some degree, when they are stored.

Benzene is a known human carcinogen. The main indoor sources of this chemical are tobacco smoke, stored fuels and paint supplies, and automobile emissions in attached garages. Actions that will reduce benzene exposure include eliminating smoking within the home, providing for maximum ventilation during painting, and discarding paint supplies and special fuels that will not be used immediately.

Common indoor plants may provide a valuable weapon in the fight against indoor air pollution. Based on preliminary evaluations of the use of common indoor plants for indoor air purification and revitalization, NASA funded a study using about a dozen popular varieties of ornamental plants to determine their effectiveness in removing several key pollutants associated with indoor air pollution. NASA research on indoor plants has found that living plants are so efficient at absorbing contaminants in the air that some will be launched into space as part of the biological life support system aboard future orbiting space stations.

Philodendron, spider plant and the golden pothos were labeled the most effective in removing formaldehyde molecules. Flowering plants such as gerbera daisy and chrysanthemums were rated superior in removing benzene from the atmosphere.



The common "Golden Pothos"