

Indoor Air Quality Assessment

Information is received by Environmental Health Safety (EHS) of an Indoor Air Quality issue such as uncomfortable temperature and/or humidity ranges or of an unusual odor experienced through the sensory perceptions of the Faculty, staff and employees at the University of Houston. Then, EHS personnel are prompted by the FAMIS system to check for the odor or temperature/humidity/Carbon Dioxide/Carbon Monoxide differentials. The checking is done by using the Industrial Hygiene Monitoring Instruments, such as the Q-Trak, and sensory perceptions of the EHS personnel. Then, if required, the services of the Plant Operations Skilled personnel to repair any equipment or issues of utilities are used. The assessment results are communicated to the requestor of the findings.

A. DEFINITIONS

Industrial Hygiene Surveys

Industrial Hygiene is generally defined as the art and science dedicated to the anticipation, recognition, evaluation, communication and control of environmental stressors in, or arising from, the workplace that may result in injury, illness, impairment, or affect the wellbeing of workers and members of the community. These stressors are divided into the categories [biological](#), [chemical](#), [physical](#), [ergonomic](#) and [psychosocial](#). Industrial Hygiene Surveys are the art and science of conducting evaluations and communicating the stressors in, or arising from, the workplace which affects the wellbeing of workers and staff, faculty and students of University of Houston.

Industrial Hygiene Surveys' Regulatory Background

The proper methodology of conducting IH surveys are established by the regulatory governmental bodies such as American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH), AIHA, National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), National Institute of Health (NIH), ASSE, OSHA, EPA and State of Texas and various organizations in the US which help in workplace wellbeing.

Industrial Hygiene Surveys

A systematic process for anticipating, identifying, analyzing and controlling risk factors.

Industrial Hygiene Surveys programs oversight

Observing a work area upon request, evaluating current work practices and equipment, and making recommendations for improvements.

University of Houston has a strong commitment to achieving our mission while protecting our most valuable resource -- our employees. Tools, machinery, work procedures and work

practices should be followed per all the governmental recommendations to promote the comfort, safety, health concerns and productivity of our employees.

C. PROCEDURES

a. Assessments of Industrial Hygiene Services EHS provides:

If information is received by Environmental Health Safety (EHS) of a mold related project such as through a visual observation or an odor concern or from the results of the monitoring instruments, as informed to EHS. Currently, Plant Operations personnel are prompted by the FAMIS system or through Facilities Management (FM) or EHS to check for mold. Then currently EHS requests the project manager to be assigned by the FM entity such as Minor and Planned Projects or Minor and In-House Construction. Most times, a meeting is setup with the requestor of the mold related project, project manager and the EHS representative.

i. Initial Inquiry

EHS or FM then starts proceeding with the steps of getting the mold removed from inside the building. The first step for EHS or FM is getting a project manager assigned on the removal of mold project.

The second step is to sample and identify the mold spores at the location of inside the building. This is usually done by the mold consultant that the project manager has contracted for the mold removal.

ii. Identification of Mold Spores and its locations.

Under the DSHS rules, public building owners such as a University, are required to remove the mold whenever identified and encountered. Also public building owners are required to inform all persons in writing (or documented oral communication) of the presence and location of mold buildup inside the buildings prior to the start of any mold related activity. This triggers mold spores sampling at the request of the project manager to the mold consultant. The goal is to have accurate current mold location information available upon request of the mold project.

Once the mold is identified, the third step is to identify the square footage of the mold area. This step is necessary because if the mold infected area in a building is less than 25 contiguous square feet than a notification to DSHS is not needed. However, if the mold area is larger than 25 contiguous square feet than a notification to the DSHS is required.

The notification can be submitted to the DSHS by either the mold consultant or the mold contractor. The fourth step is to contract the services of the mold contractor this is usually accomplished by the FM's project manager. The mold contractor is usually the entity that actually removes the mold inside containment.