

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL OF DESIGN

Indoor Air Quality

Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) is committed to the health and safety of all members of our college community and maintaining a healthy indoor environment in our buildings.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines indoor air quality (IAQ) as the air quality within and around buildings and structures, especially as it relates to the health and comfort of building occupants. There are multiple factors that contribute to indoor air quality such as ventilation, temperature and humidity levels, building materials, outdoor air quality, cleaning products and other chemicals used in the building. Personal choices such as the wearing of fragrances, growing of house plants, and storage of food can also impact IAQ.

Indoor Air Quality Managers

RISD's Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Manager and the Mechanical Supervisor of Facilities serve as the IAQ managers. All concerns pertaining to indoor air quality should be directed to them and they will initiate an initial investigation, determine a course of action, and, if necessary, contract the services of a professional consultant and services.

Reporting an IAQ Concern

To report IAQ concerns, you should either input a TMA work order via the on-line system or contact Facilities directly at 401-454-6484. When calling, please provide as much detail as possible, including location, description of problem, when it was first noticed and any other information that may be helpful in identifying the cause.

For emergencies such as breathing difficulties, chemical spills, gray water (sewer) backups or spills, or any other emergency, move to fresh air and contact Public Safety immediately at extension 6666 from a campus phone or 401-454-6666 from a cell phone or off campus.

The EH&S Department's mission is to develop and implement programs that will ensure RISD's compliance with regulations. RISD has set the goal of becoming a world-class leader of EH&S issues in the arts. To become recognized as such, our programs and facilities must become models for environmental stewardship. The administration supports, and all at RISD should embrace, the concept of protecting our environment and ensuring safe working conditions.



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Investigation and Corrective Action

The initial investigation will include interviews with the occupants of the area with specific information requested from the person who initiated the complaint and a thorough visual inspection of the area and its air handling systems. RISD has equipment to measure basic IAQ parameters including: temperature, relative humidity, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide and total volatile organic compounds. If more extensive testing is warranted, a professional consultant is engaged. The investigation will refer to various guidance documents that are available from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH).

The occupants will be apprised of the findings of the investigation, the proposed corrective action, and the timetable for completion.

If mold growth is observed, the moisture problem will be identified and addressed, the mold contamination will be cleaned and/or affected components will be removed in accordance with standard mold remediation techniques. The extent of the contamination and size of the area involved will dictate whether RISD employees or contractors will perform the work.

If the source of the mold is identified, testing will not be routinely conducted as remediating the condition should resolve the issue. Should the IAQ Managers determine that mold testing is warranted, a certified industrial hygienist (CIH) will assess the areas of concern.

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Once the IAQ issue is resolved, the College will take steps to ensure that it does not reoccur by performing routine and preventative maintenance and/or other proactive measures.

Renovations and New Construction

IAQ is a priority when renovating existing buildings or building new buildings. Important aspects such as site location and space planning, building envelope and HVAC system design, material selection and work practices are carefully considered in the planning phases and throughout these projects.

Plan Review

This plan will be periodically reviewed by the Environmental Health, Safety Department and Facilities Management to ensure we are using best possible practices and that our policy is in line with current regulatory guidance.

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