

# Good Indoor Air Quality is Good Business

By: Elia M. Sterling, President, Theodor Sterling Associates Ltd. Indoor Environment Specialists Established In 1973

Tenants of commercial buildings are keenly aware of the potential for IAQ to affect not only the health and comfort of their employees but also overall office productivity and personal performance. The International Facilities Management Association (IFMA) recently released its annual Corporate Facilities Monitor Survey, with its "Top 10 Complaints Building Managers Hear". At the top of the list was poor IAQ including comfort complaints of too hot or too cold and air stuffiness.

According to IFMA, if a building occupant is unhappy with the workplace environment productivity can be affected. In fact, most tenant IAQ concerns are about comfort conditions, particularly stale and stuffy air, less than ideal temperature conditions and unpleasant odours. How significant of a problem is poor IAQ? Well, a risk assessment conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor determined that 20% to 30% of commercial buildings have IAQ problems.

This translates into a staggering 1.4 million buildings with 21 million occupants. Clearly IAQ is now one of the most important challenges facing the building industry, and one that cannot be ignored. For B.C. building owners and managers and their tenants, facing this challenge is particularly urgent in light of the new Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) Indoor Air Quality Regulation. The regulation:

1. Establishes ventilation rates, temperature and humidity requirements.
  2. Requires that IAQ investigations be conducted and that documentation be retained.
  3. Requires the implementation of preventative maintenance practices to avoid IAQ complaints.
- However, compliance with legal and regulatory minimums is no longer enough. Today, in order to satisfy tenants and to avoid costly, time-consuming and potential litigious complaints, the building owner/manager must provide and maintain superior indoor environments.

With the new regulatory environment and growing tenant concerns related to sick building syndrome, buildings offering proactive Indoor Air Quality Management services are more competitive in the leasing market with happier, more productive and satisfied tenants which can add value to a property by lowering vacancy rates.

Occupying a building with well managed IAQ can significantly improve your tenants bottom line profitability. In fact according to a recent US Department of Energy study commercial building tenants can realize 168 billion dollars a year in savings due to productivity gained by improving IAQ. In short if employee performance and comfort is important to your tenants an IAQ management program will be considered an attractive added value service.

To provide an effective IAQ Management Program you need:

- Regularly scheduled IAQ monitoring to provide documentation of Regulatory Compliance.
- Clear, comprehensible consulting advice for effective decisions and actions.
- Cost-effective, verifiable problem detection and remediation.
- Access to the world's leading experts/scientists on indoor environments.

Call Theodor Sterling Associates today to discuss planning your program to meet the WCB Indoor Air Quality requirements.

let's clear the air

Working with you in a **proactive** approach to indoor air quality management, our experts can help prevent problems, find solutions and help you maintain an energy efficient healthy building.

Call to discuss how the WCB **Indoor Air Quality** Regulation affects your business.



**THEODOR  
STERLING**  
ASSOCIATES

The Indoor Air Quality Experts  
Setting the Standard Since 1973

tel. 604.681.2701  
fax. 604.681.2702  
Toll Free. 877.993.9933  
email. sterling@assist.ca

310-1122 Mainland St.  
Vancouver B.C. V6B 5L1

