

Top 5 Threats to the Air Quality in Your Office

#5 Air Fresheners

Although many office spaces are not constructed to allow in a constant flow of fresh outdoor air, covering up the smell of stale office air with air fresheners is not the solution. Air fresheners contain toxic chemicals that could pose a serious risk to your health. There is no governmental regulation over the ingredients used in air fresheners or in their labeling. Adequate ventilation is the best way to keep office air healthy and fresh.

#4 Location of the Ventilation Intake

Most office buildings have a ventilation system set up that circulates air from the outdoors into the building. If the location of the airflow intake is located in a poorly chosen location, you could be breathing in exhaust fumes and other dangerous chemicals. Fumes from cars and buses in a busy location could be directed inside of your office if the air intake is in the wrong location.

#3 Office Building Neighbors

Indoor air pollution is more prevalent in shared office spaces. Many offices are part of mixed commercial use buildings that share ventilation systems. If you share occupancy in a building with certain occupants you may be exposed to a higher amount of toxic chemicals. Have your office air checked if you share building space with a dry cleaner, nail or hair salon, print shop, or any other type of business that uses dangerous chemicals in their daily operation.

#2 Copier Machines and Printers

NOAA warns that office copiers and printers pose hazards to employees by leaking toxic chemicals and emitting toxic fumes. To protect workers, make sure that there is adequate ventilation in rooms containing printers and copiers. Copy machines and printers should be routinely serviced by a professional. Workers should always exercise caution when changing out toner and ink cartridges and avoid any exposure to their skin. Any toner or ink cartridge spills should be cleaned immediately and the area will need to be aired out.

#1 Cleaning Products

Most commercially available cleaning products contain unsafe chemical ingredients that can be hazardous to the air quality of your office. The threat to indoor office air is even higher when industrial strength cleaners are being used. Cleaning products can trigger asthma and allergy symptoms. They can also cause severe respiratory distress. Exposure to high levels of the chemicals found in cleaning supplies has been linked to cancer and birth defects.