Modern buildings are designed as enclosed air spaces with centralized air handling, distribution, and filtration systems to keep pollutants out. However, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency found that indoor environments, where approximately 90% of Americans spend their time, can be more polluted than outdoor environments.

What are Indoor Pollutants?

- **Chemical**: combustion sources (gas and kerosene heaters), off-gassing of building materials and furnishings, cleaning/disinfecting products, and personal care products.
- **Biological**: mold, bacteria, viruses, pollen, dust mites, and animal dander.
- **Radiological**: radon as a naturally-occurring radioactive gas.
- **Other factors**: odors (damp, musty, sewer-like, rotten, marshy, fragrant, etc.), temperature and humidity (too hot or cold, too humid or dry), air velocity (drafty or stuffy), or dust.

What are Common Health Effects?

- Short-term: irritation to eyes, nose, and throat, headaches, fatigue, hypersensitivity, and allergies.
- Long-term (due to repeated exposures): respiratory and heart diseases, even cancer.

How to Address an Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Issue in Your Area

- Locate or identify the source of the issue.
- Keep track of when your symptoms (e.g., aches, pains, headaches, etc.) appear and go away.
- Immediately convey your concerns to your Manager or Supervisor and Facilities Management. This could also include submitting an **Indoor Air Quality Occupant Questionnaire** to the Environmental Health and Radiation Safety Department (EHRS).

EHRS Role

- Serve as a technical expert to identify, assess, and diagnose the problem, and its associated effects on your comfort and health.
- Collaborate with other groups to remediate the IAQ issue and ensure that the building is operating under acceptable standards.
- Document and report findings of the investigation results to affected building occupants.

Quick Take

- Locate or identify the source of the issue.
- Immediately report IAQ issues to your Manager or Supervisor and Facilities Management.
- Complete the [Indoor Air Quality Occupant Questionnaire](www.temple.edu/ehrs).

To view fact sheets on other topics, please visit [www.temple.edu/ehrs](www.temple.edu/ehrs).