

Considerations for a Safe and Healthy Home



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Extension

The Importance of Healthy Housing



"A man's home is his castle ..."

"... and where shall a man be safe if it be not in his own house?"

Edward Coke, 1644



At least **90 percent** of an American's life is spent indoors.



Partners in Healthy Housing Concepts:



American Housing Survey/
HUD

NCHH examines the "house as a system," and directs efforts to keeping it:

Dry, Clean, Pest-Free, Ventilated, Safe, Contaminant-Free, and Maintained.



Today's Focus: PEOPLE

- a) General (Adults/Families)
- b) Children
- c) Convalescents

Indoor Air Quality/ALLERGENS:

Fifty million Americans suffer from **allergies** and an additional **20 million** from **asthma**, both of which are caused or worsened by the home environment.



At least three percent of American healthcare costs are attributable to asthma.

Dust and Dust Mites

- Invisible to the naked eye.
- Thrive in hot, humid environments (70 percent relative humidity or higher).



House dust mite

UF

- Live in bedding and upholstery.
- Dine on the discarded skin cells of humans and domestic animals.

Managing Dust and Dust Mites:



Dust frequently with a damp cloth.
Dust *before* vacuuming.

Change bed linens frequently.

Vacuum floors, furniture, and bedding thoroughly and regularly.

Intensive dusting weekly is more effective than light dusting daily.

Those with respiratory sensitivity should consider a HEPA vacuum.



Fido and Fluffy



Seventy percent of American homes include at least one dog or cat, either of which can cause allergic reactions if housed indoors.

Cat allergies are more common, affecting up to 25 percent of the population.

Dibs on the
doggie dander,
Ralph.

You got the good
stuff last night!



Mold in the Home

Mold grows in response to **MOISTURE** in the atmosphere.

Likely sources of moisture in the home include:

- plumbing leaks
- unvented [to the outside] appliances
- outdoor drainage issues (water entering through basement or foundation)

Always use exhaust fans in bathroom and kitchen to prevent the growth of mold.

Mold will always recur until the moisture source is **ELIMINATED!!**



Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)

Chemicals/Toxins:

Household cleaning products

Air fresheners

Paint, sprays, coatings

Carpeting

Vinyl flooring

Drywall

Formaldehyde

Hobbies



Human health risks increase with duration and quantity of exposure.

Responsible for respiratory (air quality) issues,
Damage to kidneys, liver, and neurological system,
Carcinogenic potential.

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

www.hhs.gov



Household Products Database

Health & Safety Information on Household Products

National Institutes of Health
National Library of Medicine
Specialized Information Services



www.hhs.gov: **Household Products Database**
Browse by category of product or product name.
Divulges product ingredients and potential
health effects.

Household Pests



Mice, cockroaches, and other unwelcome “boarders” have the same basic needs as humans:

Food, water, and shelter.

COCKROACH droppings and body fragments (frass) associated with allergies and asthma.

MOUSE droppings/urine associated with hantavirus, leptospirosis, salmonellosis, tularemia, and plague. Mouse dander an allergy/asthma trigger.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Create an **INHOSPITABLE** environment!
(80 percent of human exposure to pesticides occurs indoors.)

- Landscaping should be at least three feet away from the house.
- Seal any cracks or holes in your home's exterior with wire mesh and caulking.
- Keep your home (and kitchen) clean. Store foodstuffs in tightly-sealed plastic containers.
- Do not leave standing pet food out.
- What's under your bed??



BED B-UGHS!!



- Feed on animal and human blood, but do not live *on* humans like other parasites, as they crawl away after "mealtime."
- Not known to transfer disease. Their bite causes itching/rash, treatable with cortisone products.



Fire/Carbon Monoxide



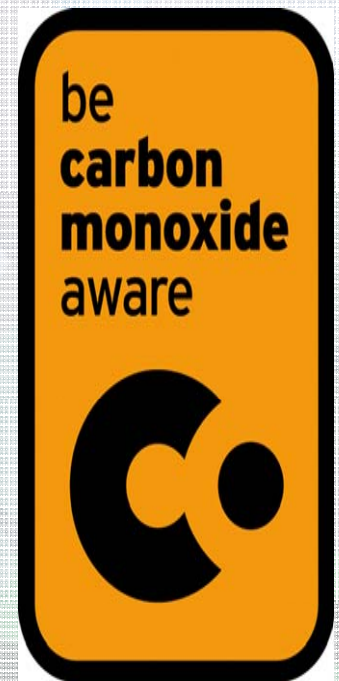
Residents of the **southeast** experience the highest incidence of fires in the nation.

Have furnace and fireplace/chimney serviced by a professional yearly!

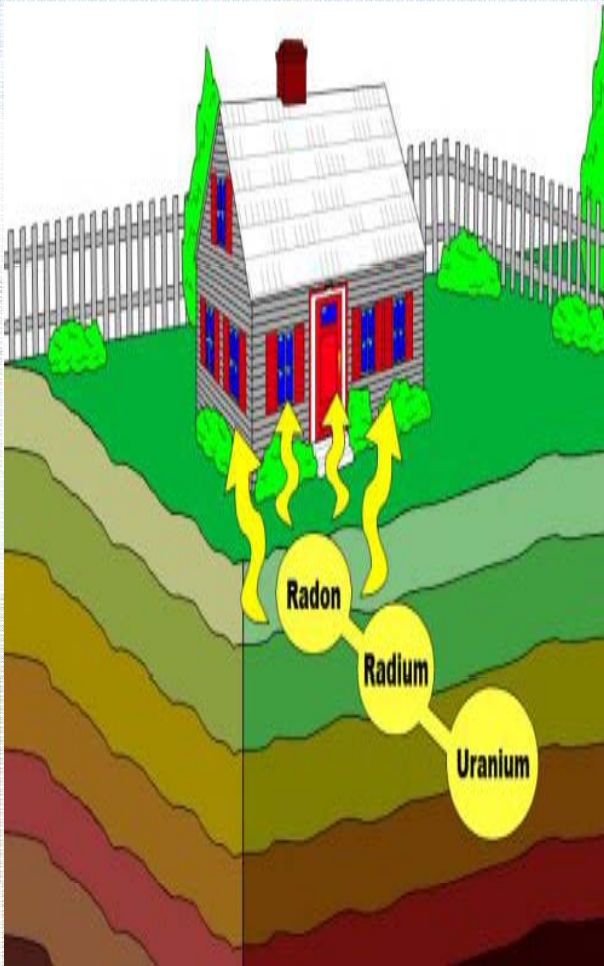
Develop and rehearse a fire escape plan.

Do **NOT** warm up your vehicle in an attached garage.

Install carbon monoxide detectors.



Radon



- Found in one of every 15 homes in America.
- Gas caused by the breakdown of uranium in rocks and soil.
- Enters the home through holes or cracks in the foundation.
 - Colorless, odorless, tasteless.
- Second leading cause of **lung cancer**.

TESTING is the only way to determine your home's risk.

Homes with Children



Fully **90 percent** of children's exposure to secondhand smoke occurs in the home or car, with their parents as the smoker.

ENVIRONMENTAL Tobacco Smoke:

- Up to **1 million** children a year suffer from increased asthma symptoms and attacks as the result of secondhand smoke.
- **300,000** infants and young children are diagnosed with pneumonia and bronchitis as the result of secondhand smoke.
- Secondhand smoke is a leading cause of ear infections in children.
- Smoking is the **#1** cause of house fires.

Lead Poisoning



Lead poisoning remains the #1 environmental threat to America's children. The home is a child's primary source of lead poisoning.

Sources of Lead in the Home:

- Lead paint (any home built before 1978)
- Consumer products (toys/vinyl mini blinds)
 - Seasonal items (lead china, artificial Christmas trees, lights)

Considerations for Convalescents

- Diminished immune response
 - Mobility impairment
- Compromised visual perception
- Overall weakness and/or malaise
- Potential for depression/sense of isolation/
anxiety




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Essentials for Healthy Homes Practitioners' Training
2011:

Memphis

Jackson

Nashville

Chattanooga

Knoxville

Johnson City

(Training dates to be announced January 2011) 23