

HEALTHY BUILDINGS CHECKLIST

The first step to better health is better knowledge. Here's what you need to know to start improving the health of your building.

Clean and disinfect your facility
It's important to audit your facility's cleaning and disinfecting policies, procedures and schedules according to [CDC recommendations](#). Clean surfaces using soap and water, then use a disinfectant product. Cleaning with soap and water reduces the number of germs, dirt and impurities on the surface, while the disinfectant kills germs. Increase routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces, including: tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets and sinks, among others. Always read and follow the directions on the label of cleaning solutions for safe and effective use.



Clean building duct work
Regular duct work maintenance helps keep the system clean and removes any blockages or build-up of dirt. [According to a study published in the AIRAH Journal](#), microbial contamination was the main contributing fact in several indoor air contamination cases.¹ Inspect the building exterior, along with the air intake, and the HVAC system throughout the building. It's important to avoid releasing pollutants into the air intake system. The location of bathroom and kitchen vents and exhaust may also contaminate air intakes.



Change filters
For HVAC systems that are possibly contaminated, it is not necessary to suspend HVAC system maintenance, including filter changes, but additional safety precautions are warranted. The risks associated with handling contaminated filters in ventilation systems under field-use conditions have not been evaluated, but technicians or engineers should wear proper PPE. When feasible, filters can be disinfected with a 10% bleach solution or another appropriate disinfectant. Filters (disinfected or not) can be bagged and disposed of in regular trash. [See ASHRAE's recommendations](#) regarding filtration systems.



Update and improve filtration systems
Improve the efficiency of the filters serving your HVAC systems using ASHRAE guidance. Mechanical filters are one of the most common types of filters found in HVAC systems. Research the various air filtration and cleaning technologies available for the building types listed on the [ASHRAE COVID-19 Preparedness Resources website](#).



Measure and improve indoor air quality
Having the right filtration, particulate sensing and cleaning systems in place can help ensure that the air inside your building is free of pathogens, allergens and other indoor air pollutants. Maintaining proper pressurization in critical spaces and restrooms can help keep air quality in check. Review [Honeywell's Air Quality Brochure](#) for more information.





Increase outside air intake

Building operators should increase their system's outdoor air ventilation to reduce the recirculation of air in the space. [ASHRAE guidance](#) indicates that this must be done as much as the system, climate and space conditions will allow.



Control ventilation

Meet or exceed local guidelines for outdoor air-ventilation rates to control indoor sources of odors, chemicals and carbon dioxide. [According to the Harvard School of Public Health](#), it's important to filter outdoor and recirculated air.² Avoid outdoor air intakes at street level or near other outdoor sources of pollutants. Conduct regular maintenance and monitor ventilation in real time to prevent and promptly resolve ventilation issues.



Conduct BAS maintenance health checks

It's important to understand the type of BAS you have in your building. HVAC controls range from simple single-zone thermostats controlling a single HVAC unit's heating and cooling modes to complex BAS that integrate controls for one large building or even multiple large buildings in a portfolio – such as school districts, university campuses and large government installations. [Learn more](#) about what ASHRAE recommends for your BAS.



¹ [AIRAH Journal, Microbials and HVAC system operation and maintenance in office buildings, June 1997](#) [Accessed October 22, 2020]

² Harvard School of Public Health, [The Nine Foundations of a Healthy Building](#), 2016 [Accessed October 22, 2020]

³ EPA, [Indoor Air Quality, Improving Indoor Air Quality](#) [Accessed October 22, 2020]

For more information:

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