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CLEAN AIR

Allies

Dear Clean Air Ally,

At our June 18 Zoom meeting, it was incredibly rewarding to connect with fellow school indoor air quality (IAQ) advocates from near and far and to hear your fantastic insights.

If you were among those who could attend, thank you very much! If you weren't able to attend—we know this is a busy time—we hope to see you at a future Zoom meeting. We also appreciate your comments by email at cleanairalliesorg@gmail.com.

This month, in addition to a brief CalSHAPE update, we have not just one but two school IAQ-related resources to share with you:

- a set of new school IAQ fact sheets from ASHRAE and the U.S. Green Building Council, and
- a report on an important topic—IAQ and disability rights—from Australian IAQ advocacy organization The Safer Air Project.

Please check them out and let us know what you think!

In Solidarity,

JuNelle + Liesl

JuNelle Harris and Liesl McConchie
California Parents and Co-Founders, Clean Air Allies

Quick Update on the CalSHAPE Grant Program for School IAQ Assessments and HVAC Work

As of publication of this newsletter, the [trailer bill](#) that proposes to take ~\$190 million from the CalSHAPE grant program as part of the California budget process is still pending. Clean Air Allies is collaborating with educators' union CFT and others to oppose the trailer bill. CalSHAPE has been an important source of funding for IAQ assessments and HVAC work in California schools. This work should continue, not be defunded.

If you are in California and would like to speak up in support of CalSHAPE, you can contact your local state assemblymember or senator and ask them to say NO to the CalSHAPE [trailer bill](#).

Relatedly, Clean Air Allies recently obtained public records data about nearly 4,700 California schools that have already received CalSHAPE grants for IAQ assessments and HVAC work. We plan to share this data with you in the near future. Our hope is that those of you in California can use the data to learn more about the IAQ assessment information collected, or work not yet finished, in your local school district.

New School IAQ Fact Sheets from ASHRAE and the U.S. Green Building Council

On May 30, 2025, [new school IAQ fact sheets](#) were released by two industry stakeholder groups: the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) and the U.S. Green Building Council (Center for Green Schools division).

The fact sheets run 2-3 pages each and cover a range of topics:

- Ventilation

- Germicidal Ultraviolet (GUV)
- Electronic Air Cleaners
- Disinfectants
- Indoor Air Quality Monitoring
- Indoor Air Quality During Wildfires

A key focus is the application in school environments of ASHRAE Standards 62.1 (Ventilation and Acceptable Indoor Air Quality) and 241 (Control of Infectious Aerosols), as well as ASHRAE Guideline 44 (Protecting Building Occupants from Smoke During Wildfire and Prescribed Burn Events).

SERIES 1
School Indoor
Air Quality Basics
Fact Sheet

The series provides important background information.

School Indoor Air Quality Basics

In recent years, the COVID-19 pandemic and increased wildfire smoke events have heightened awareness around the critical need to improve indoor air quality (IAQ) in schools. Children are particularly vulnerable to poor IAQ due to their developing respiratory systems, higher respiratory rates relative to their body weight, and less efficient nasal filtering for larger particles during exercise. Despite challenges such as limited funding, high occupant densities, aging infrastructure, and staffing shortages, schools can implement a range of practical and scalable IAQ improvement strategies.

Indoor Air Quality Standards and Targets

While there is no nationally adopted IAQ performance standard, trusted organizations such as the CDC, the EPA, and ASHRAE issue guidance that addresses IAQ. The CDC recommends aiming for at least 5 equivalent air changes per hour (eACH) to reduce airborne viral particles. ASHRAE is a globally recognized organization known for establishing standards for building design and operation. The three ASHRAE documents most relevant to school IAQ are Standard 62.1, Standard 241, and Guideline 44.

ASHRAE Standard 62.1 Ventilation and Acceptable Indoor Air Quality

ASHRAE Standard 62.1 establishes minimum targets for outdoor air and filtered/clean airflow in schools, for the purpose of achieving acceptable IAQ. These ventilation targets serve as a foundation that schools should aim to meet or exceed.

The minimum outdoor ventilation rate for classrooms is ~18 cfm/person. Requirements for offices (~17 cfm/person), cafeterias (~9 cfm/person), and gyms (~48 cfm/person) vary based on occupancy and activity levels.

ASHRAE Standard 241 Control of Infectious Aerosols

ASHRAE Standard 241 introduces an Infection Risk Management Mode (IRMM) designed for schools to implement during periods of elevated infection risk, such as pandemics (e.g., COVID-19) or seasonal endemics like influenza. New, occupancy-based clean airflow targets for the control of infectious aerosols are established.

For infection risk management, the minimum clean airflow rate for a classroom is 40 cfm/person. In offices (30 cfm/person), cafeterias (60 cfm/person), and gyms (80 cfm/person), target clean airflow rates depend on occupancy and activity.

ASHRAE Guideline 44 Protecting Building Occupants From Smoke During Wildfire and Prescribed Burn Events

Guideline 44 recommends measures to minimize the impact of outdoor smoke on IAQ. It provides procedures for schools to follow during wildfire or prescribed burn smoke events, including recommendations for the building envelope, ventilation, and air cleaning systems. See the [Indoor Air Quality During Wildfires Fact Sheet](#) for more information on Guideline 44.

Disclaimer: For informational purposes only; USGBC and ASHRAE do not endorse listed products or practices and assumes no liability for their use.

While Clean Air Allies does not necessarily endorse every specific recommendation in the fact sheets, they are worth checking out.

[Read the School IAQ Fact Sheets](#)

From Australia, a Report on Why Safer Shared Air Is a Critical Accessibility and Inclusion Issue, Including in Learning Environments

The movement for clean indoor air is global. Australia-based indoor air advocacy organization [The Safer Air Project](#) is a notable voice in this movement.

In November 2024, they released the report [Safer shared air: a critical accessibility and inclusion issue](#), exploring how access to clean indoor air is a disability rights

According to the report's executive summary, "there is a widespread lack of recognition that poor indoor air quality (IAQ) reduces accessibility of indoor spaces for people with risk factors for poor health outcomes from airborne infection and other pollutants."

Two of four priority action areas identified by the report are safe learning environments for children in schools and safe working conditions for employees.

Because American disability law differs from Australian disability law, some of the specific legal frameworks discussed in [Safer shared air](#) are not directly applicable in the U.S. context.

Still, the report offers an important and relevant analysis of why improving IAQ is necessary to ensure that indoor spaces are accessible and inclusive.

[Read the Safer Shared Air Report](#)



Safer shared air

A critical accessibility
and inclusion issue



Do you have questions? Please contact us at cleanairalliesorg@gmail.com.

You Can Support Our Work to Improve School IAQ

Clean Air Allies is a startup nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring that all schoolchildren, school workers, and their broader communities have access to the benefits of clean indoor air.

Donations are tax-exempt and go toward development of school IAQ-related programming and resources.

[DONATE NOW](#)

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