

Indoor Air Quality Maintenance: Protecting the Health of Your Home and Family

When homeowners think about maintenance, they often focus on visible systems—roofing, plumbing, flooring, and paint. Yet one of the most critical aspects of a healthy home is invisible: indoor air quality (IAQ). The air inside a home can contain dust, allergens, moisture, chemicals, and biological contaminants that, over time, affect comfort, property condition, and personal health. In fact, indoor air can be more polluted than outdoor air if proper maintenance practices are neglected. Proactively managing indoor air quality is therefore not optional, it is a fundamental part of responsible homeownership.

At the core of indoor air quality is ventilation. Modern homes are built tighter for energy efficiency, but this reduces natural air flow and can trap pollutants inside. Without sufficient air exchange, everyday activities such as cooking, cleaning, and bathing allow moisture and airborne particles to accumulate. Running bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans during and after use is one of the simplest ways to remove humidity and odors. Homeowners should also ensure that dryer vents are properly ducted to the exterior and kept clear of lint. For homes with limited natural airflow, mechanical ventilation systems or energy recovery ventilators (ERVs) can provide controlled fresh air without sacrificing efficiency.

Filtration is equally important. HVAC systems continuously circulate air throughout the home, which means the furnace filter serves as the first line of defense against airborne particles. A low-quality or clogged filter allows dust, pollen, and pet dander to recirculate, aggravating allergies and reducing system performance. Upgrading to a pleated, high-efficiency filter (MERV 8–13 for most residential systems) and replacing it every 60–90 days—or more frequently in homes with pets or construction dust—can significantly improve air cleanliness. Routine servicing of heating and cooling equipment further ensures coils, blowers, and ducts remain clean and efficient.

Moisture control is another critical component of IAQ maintenance. Excess humidity creates the ideal environment for mold growth, which can damage building materials and contribute to respiratory issues. Homeowners should keep indoor relative humidity between 30 and 50 percent. Dehumidifiers in basements/crawlspaces, prompt repair of plumbing leaks, and proper grading around the foundation all help prevent moisture intrusion. Signs such as musty odors, condensation on windows, or staining on walls should be addressed immediately before mold colonies develop.

Common household products also influence air quality. Cleaning supplies, paints, adhesives, and air fresheners may release volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which linger in enclosed spaces. Choosing low-VOC or fragrance-free products reduces chemical exposure. Proper storage of fuels, solvents, and pesticides outside of living areas further limits contamination. Additionally, regular vacuuming with a HEPA-equipped vacuum and damp dusting surfaces helps capture fine particles rather than redistributing them into the air.

Finally, routine inspections and monitoring provides peace of mind. Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors should be tested monthly. Homes with combustion appliances or attached garages should be especially vigilant about CO risks. In some cases, professional air quality testing may be beneficial, particularly after renovations, water damage, or persistent health symptoms.

Indoor air quality maintenance is not complex, but it does require consistency. By combining ventilation, filtration, moisture management, and smart product choices, homeowners create a healthier indoor environment while extending the useful life of their system.

If you have questions about the air quality in your home or any other aspect of home maintenance, please give us a call. We are here as a resource to you and your family.

Arden “Chip” Anderson is the owner of the Anderson Property Group, Inc., a property inspection and consulting firm in Star.

986-226-5355

arden@theandersonpropertygroup.com

www.theandersonpropertygroup.com