

# IAQ News



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**“Sick School!”**  
It's an easy label to apply, but terribly difficult and expensive to remove.

Dave Blake, NWCAA  
IAQ Specialist

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An electronic newsletter for school Indoor Air Quality exclusively for Northwest schools



Rich Prill (right) meets school officials frequently to talk about improving indoor air quality.

## Put “Virtual School Walkthrough” DVD to Work for You

By Dave Blake

Over the past year this newsletter has heralded the availability and utility of the DVD, *The Virtual School Walkthrough: Identifying and Solving Common Indoor Air Quality Problems*. We continue getting feedback from people across the nation who have created IAQ programs from scratch using little but the information, techniques and philosophy packed into this DVD. This is a pitch to encourage YOU to take advantage of this resource.

The Washington State Department of Health facilitated production of the DVD for use in nine workshops in Washington in 2006-2007. The DVD includes a video presentation of the virtual walkthrough PowerPoint® session that Rich Prill and Dave Blake have delivered at the EPA IAQ Tools for Schools National Symposium in DC the last three years to superlative reviews from attendees. The 62-minute DVD includes about 200 slides, digitally inserted into the DVD for excellent quality (not a videotape of the presentation screen in the meeting room). Most of the talking, happily, is done by Rich Prill of WSU Extension Energy Program.

Rich has been involved in the world of IAQ for over 25 years. Since

See ***Virtual School Walkthrough*** on page 8

# IAQ News

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WSUEEP-08-013 • April 2008

## Free Workshops in Mt. Vernon

- **School IAQ Fundamentals –**  
*Tuesday, June 3, 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.*
- **Moisture/Mold –**  
*Wednesday, June 4, 8:30 a.m. to Noon*

The Northwest Clean Air Agency is sponsoring these workshops led by Rich Prill, Building Scientist with WSU Extension Energy Program. The workshops will be held at the Northwest Clean Air Agency office at 1600 South Second St., Mount Vernon.

There will necessarily be some informational overlap between the two workshops, but we will deal with mold issues fairly thoroughly from prevention to cleanup.



To sign up on a first-come, first-served basis, contact Dave Blake at [dave@nwcleanair.org](mailto:dave@nwcleanair.org) or (360) 428-1617 x212. Anyone is welcome, statewide. We can handle 25-30 attendees and we always fill up. 🚌

# IAQ News

A quarterly electronic newsletter exclusively for Northwest schools.

Please circulate this subscription opportunity throughout the Northwest to those who may be interested.

There are two ways to subscribe:

- 1) To view *IAQ News*, click here:  
[www.energy.wsu.edu/projects/building/iaq\\_nl.cfm](http://www.energy.wsu.edu/projects/building/iaq_nl.cfm)  
 The newsletter contains a link for subscription information.
- 2) Or, send a blank email message to: [subscribe-iaq@listserv.energy.wsu.edu](mailto:subscribe-iaq@listserv.energy.wsu.edu)

You will receive a confirmation message. When you reply to that message you will be subscribed and will receive all future postings. You can easily unsubscribe at any time.

This broadcast email list not only provides automatic delivery of the quarterly *IAQ News*, but includes announcements about news of interest, training events, grant opportunities, and other information useful to school districts, agencies, and stakeholders involved in school IAQ and operations and maintenance.

*IAQ News* is an opportunity for all interested parties to communicate, and add to the collective wisdom.

Note: Starting with this issue, *Indoor Air Quality in Northwest Schools* is now named *IAQ News*.

## Benefits of a Proactive IAQ Program for Your School District

By *Dave Blake*

In the pre-dawn hours, a Seattle TV news reporter squints into the camera lights while pointing to a local middle school and declaring, "Sick school!" It's an easy label to apply, but terribly difficult and expensive to remove.

How can you dramatically reduce the chances of having to face this scenario? By starting – today – the process of creating a formal IAQ program of policies and procedures for your school district. There are plenty of resources on the EPA website and others to get you started. Much that you need to know is waiting for you on the Virtual School Walkthrough DVD, discussed elsewhere in this newsletter. There is a national mentor network to keep you energized and on track. You can do it and we want to help!

If your district creates an IAQ program and gets it backed by your superintendent and adopted by the school board, the next logical step is to share the good news with the community via local media outlets. Positive press coverage of your proactive stance on IAQ means you are on record as caring about IAQ... before trouble hits. Then, if an incident does get reported (water leaks/mold, complaints of symptoms only at school, etc.) and the media gets involved, they MUST in good conscience lead off the story with the fact that the school district



has been proactive and systematic in anticipating and dealing with potential IAQ problems.

A formal IAQ program builds trust and relationships. Staff and parents know who the "go to" person is on IAQ issues – your IAQ Coordinator. Comments on IAQ are encouraged. Responses are tracked and accountable. All IAQ data recorded on campus are available to staff and parents immediately. The whole program is an open book. Small problems stay small. When a potential crisis situation rears its ugly head, it can be dealt with rationally, without the hysterical, angry overtones that mistrust breeds.

Finally, of course, a formal IAQ program means that every classroom will be maintained in dry, clean, comfortable, pollutant-free and well-ventilated conditions... or your IAQ Coordinator should hear about it. Unnecessary tensions among staff are reduced. Harmony flourishes. Birds sing. Start your IAQ program today. 🐦

## Managing Polluted Zones & Hidden Cavities

There are some parts of almost any school the air quality of which you don't want staff and students to experience. Underground tunnels, boiler rooms, crawlspaces, utility chases and other potentially contaminated areas are commonly adjacent to – and potentially share air with – occupied hallways and classrooms. Thoroughly decontaminating any of these trouble spots can be prohibitively expensive or near-impossible. However, depressurizing these areas with respect to adjacent occupied spaces (with carefully planned and sized exhaust fans) can be a simpler, much cheaper alternative.

In the Winter 2008 issue of *IAQ News* we discussed the principle of maintaining "Clean to Dirty" air flow direction as a useful mantra for any facility manager. With "Clean to Dirty" in mind, check each potentially undesirable zone with your chemical smoke tube to ensure airflow is from the occupied area to the problem area and then outside. If not, then look for an outside wall in the problem area through which you can punch an exhaust fan for depressurization and isolation of the contamination. 🚧



*Exhaust fan in tunnel maintains "clean to dirty" air flow, preventing exposures to occupants in classrooms above.*



*Keep tunnels, crawlspaces, and other areas containing contaminants under negative pressure compared to occupied.*

*Left: Other potential indoor air contaminants in these areas can include radon, pesticides, rodents, insects, molds, soil gas, moisture, and other pollutants.*



## **Register for EPA's 2008 IAQ Symposium**

Registration will open in mid-June for **EPA's Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools (IAQ TfS) Symposium** to be held December 4-6, 2008, in Washington, D.C.

Join school leaders from across the nation to share best practices and discuss the importance of developing effective IAQ management practices and how the indoor environment relates to teaching and learning. Attendees learn about available resources and materials, including the IAQ TfS Kit, which will enable them to support and implement good IAQ practices in schools.

Visit [www.iaqsymposium.com](http://www.iaqsymposium.com) to learn more about the IAQ TfS Symposium. Past Symposium attendees have raved:

"I enjoyed the energy, drive, and passion that fills this Symposium with colleagues with a mutual desire - improving IAQ in schools for our students, staff, and public."

– *Facility Manager*

"The most valuable part of the Symposium was the opportunity to network. Superbly done!"

– *School Administrator*

"The powerhouse of speakers has given value to the Symposium. They have given us a lot of tools to use."

– *Teacher*

"I enjoyed the materials provided, faculty speakers, networking, learning what others have done and dealt with successfully. [The] student presentation is hope for the future!"

– *School Nurse*

"The quantity and quality of the documents and resources were wonderful - can't wait to take them back to my schools."

– *Teacher*

To learn more about EPA's schools program and to become involved, visit [www.epa.gov/iaq/schools](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools).



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## **DVD on Asthma-Friendly Schools**

***Asthma Friendly Schools: A Coordinated School Health Approach*** is a 17-minute DVD that details the Oregon Department of Education's approach to asthma education and awareness in Oregon schools. Oregon's approach can be used as a model for other states. The DVD is not copyrighted and can be freely copied. To get a free copy, contact [tamara.kuenzi@state.or.us](mailto:tamara.kuenzi@state.or.us). 🚌

## May Webinar: Marketing Asthma-Friendly Schools

By Sarah Merkle, MPH, Health Scientist

Division of Adolescent and School Health Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, Georgia

How can you market asthma-friendly schools? This event will provide the answer!

### “Marketing Asthma-Friendly Schools Webinar”

Date: Tuesday, May 20, 2008

Time: 3:00 – 4:00 pm EDT

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Adolescent and School Health is hosting this professional development webinar to provide information on how to create and market asthma-friendly schools.

The event will highlight the new

CDC toolkit, *Initiating Change: Creating an Asthma-Friendly School*, which provides champions at the district and school levels with the tools to help persuade people in their schools and communities of the importance of creating asthma-friendly schools.

The cornerstone of the toolkit is a 13-minute inspirational video that features real-life success stories of students who, thanks to their schools' implementation of asthma-friendly policies and programs, now have their asthma under control.

To register for the event go to: <https://kessjones-ls.webex.com/mw0304l/mywebex/default.do?siteurl=kessjones-ls&service=6> and click the “enroll” tab. Once you have registered, you will receive an e-mail message with information on how to access the event. Both the presentation and its accompanying audio will be streamed to your computer. For questions about registering for or accessing the webinar, please contact Technical Support at (866) 779-3239 or (916) 463-8262. For other questions about the webinar, contact Gus Nelson at [gnelson@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:gnelson@access.k12.wv.us). 📧

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## Klamath County School District... Continues to Move Ahead

By Darin Martins, Klamath County School District

The article on our school district in the Winter *IAQ News* received excellent reviews from many people in this area. The school board was very excited to learn about our proposed School IAQ plan – every member thought it was a great idea!

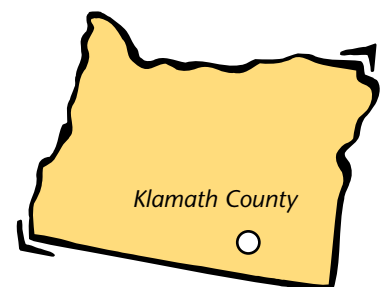
Our superintendent Greg Thede has been very supportive of the plan and recommended it to the board. The board will present our School IAQ Plan at the April meeting and vote to adopt it at the May meeting. After it is adopted, Gary Worden and I will begin giving in-service trainings

about our plan to the schools, one school at a time. We'll get to as many as we can before summer break and get the remaining schools this fall.

The initial responses we have gotten have been very favorable. We have continued to respond to IAQ issues as they come up. With the knowledge we now have, and the instrumentation that Larry Hanson, the maintenance director, has purchased for us, we have been able to address and resolve quite a few IAQ problems. Several of our maintenance staff members have gotten involved with it also.

We've even had a short write-up in the local paper.

We feel once the plan is made policy and all the staff has been shown the benefits and results that will come from it, our School IAQ Plan will be something to be proud of. 📧



## “Energy/Facilities Connections” Conference Set

The Washington State Department of General Administration’s Energy Team, the Plant Operations Support Consortium, and WSU Extension Energy Program will host the fourth annual Energy/Facilities Connections Conference in Leavenworth, Washington. This year’s conference, **Building Energy and Facility Success... for a Sustainable Future**, promises to be the best ever, building previous years’ successes and providing attendees with relevant, practical tools for enhancing their productivity and effectiveness.

The conference will be a comprehensive training opportunity for energy, facilities, safety, operations and business-related professionals. The event provides unique opportunities for public and non-profit professionals to discuss best practice approaches to vexing issues. Participants will also have ample opportunities to network in scheduled and informal settings, further enhancing the 2.5 day experience.

### Where/When

Leavenworth, Washington  
Wednesday - Friday, May 21-23, 2008

### What to Expect

We’ve got an impressive, high-end roster of conference speakers lined up. See the agenda at: [www.ga.wa.gov/plant/EFCAgenda.pdf](http://www.ga.wa.gov/plant/EFCAgenda.pdf) In addition, **BetterBricks** is sponsoring a hands-on, innovative energy device technologies demonstration, and the **Northwest Energy Efficiency Council** is sponsoring a tour of the nationally acclaimed Sleeping Lady Mountain Retreat [www.sleepinglady.com/home](http://www.sleepinglady.com/home)

### Registration/Cost

Online Registration Form:  
<https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/apps/GAEvents/EFRegForm.aspx>

Just \$250 per person for Plant Operations Support Consortium members and \$400 per person for non-members. Registration includes luncheons on

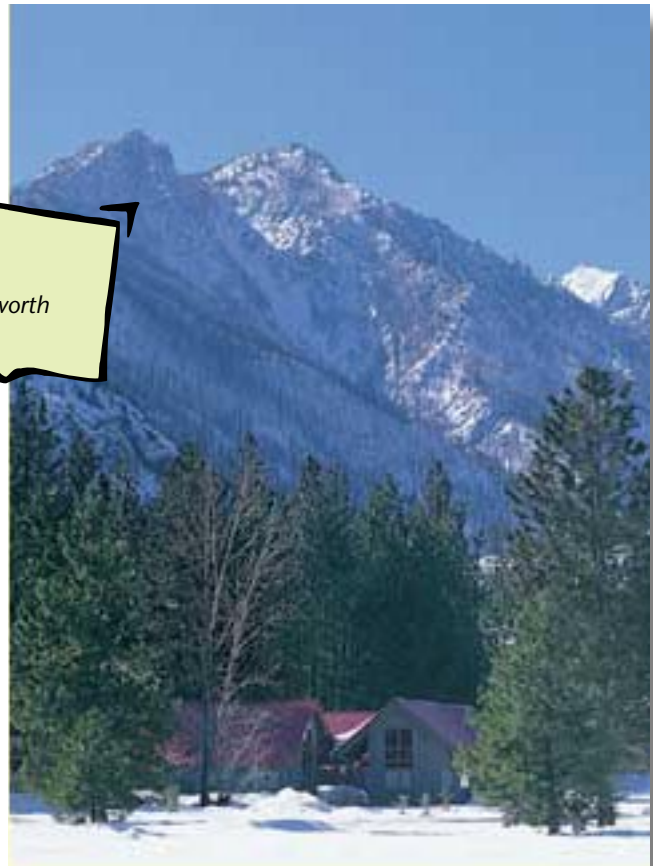


Photo from the Sleeping Lady Mountain Retreat website.

*A tour of the Sleeping Lady Mountain Retreat is on the agenda.*

May 21 and May 22. To avoid a late charge, please register by May 12.

Do you plan on attending only the Friday morning custodial track and energy demo/tour activities? The cost is \$50 for members and \$100 for non-members for that one-half day of intensive activities.

### More Information

Conference website:  
[www.ga.wa.gov/Events/EFCHome.htm](http://www.ga.wa.gov/Events/EFCHome.htm)

For additional event questions, please contact Plant Operations Support Consortium staff:

**Bob MacKenzie** (360) 956-2055  
[mackenzieb@energy.wsu.edu](mailto:mackenzieb@energy.wsu.edu) or  
**Phil Partington** (360) 956-2057  
[partingtonp@energy.wsu.edu](mailto:partingtonp@energy.wsu.edu) 📧

## Asthma “Trigger” Control DVD Released By NW Clean Air Agency

Everybody knows somebody with asthma. Now there is a new 26-minute DVD, **Attack Asthma at Home: A Practical Approach to Asthma “Trigger” Source Control and Prevention**, which was painstakingly reviewed for accuracy by experts and is receiving superlative reviews from all corners of the country.

The DVD is downloadable from

the Northwest Clean Air Agency (NWCCA) website at [www.nwcleanair.org](http://www.nwcleanair.org). A Spanish language version will be posted by May 1, and hard copies will also be available from NWCAA. The DVD is not copyrighted and may be reproduced for redistribution.

There are many potential outlets for the DVD. For example, it can be shown to groups in workshops.

It’s being used in allergist’s waiting rooms. It can be broadcast by local public television channels. You can paste the link in an email and forward it to your personal or professional contacts or listservs. 📺

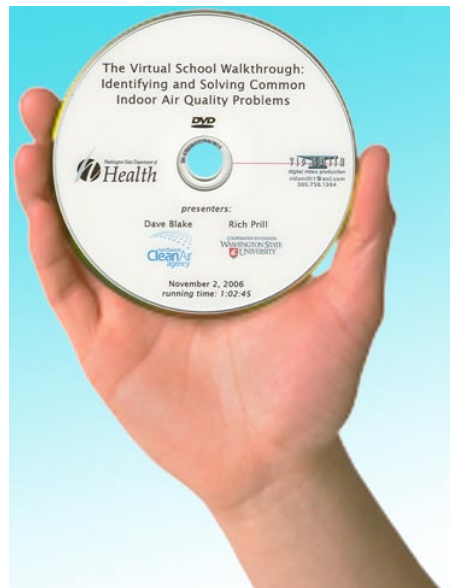
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## Virtual School Walkthrough

*Continued from page 1*

moving to Spokane with the WSU Extension Energy Program in 1988, he has helped hundreds of PNW schools address indoor air quality issues, often with onsite walkthrough evaluations of benchmark parameters. These years of local experience are distilled and captured in the DVD.

Rich carefully explains two important concepts – air flow direction (“clean to dirty”) and carbon dioxide diagnostics for assessing ventilation adequacy and dilution of pollutants. He then takes us on a virtual walkthrough of a school with typical issues, top to bottom, inside and outside. The DVD is an excellent primer on school IAQ. It can be used to acquaint anyone – administrators, custodians, teachers, parents, nurses, school boards – with what we mean when we speak of Indoor Air Quality. The DVD sets a tone of



mutual cooperation, trust and open communication among all the players in a school setting – a tone that you can carry right into efforts at your school.

The DVD has been sent to key people in all 50 states. A few states have picked up on its value

and have “painted” their regions with copies, helping spread the word. But we suspect the DVD can do more good out there if more people get access. The DVD is not copyrighted – you can burn more copies and pass them around. We believe this is a tool that will go to work for you!

To get the “Virtual School Walkthrough” DVD:

- Request a hard copy by contacting me at [dave@nwcleanair.org](mailto:dave@nwcleanair.org), (360) 428-1617 x212, or
- View or download the DVD from the Northwest Clean Air Agency at [www.nwcleanair.org](http://www.nwcleanair.org). This on-line version is arranged by chapters for easy viewing. 📺