

Indoor Air Quality

Protecting Tenants and Property Owners

BACKGROUND

Indoor air quality continues to be an issue for commercial property owners and the tenants. Legislative measures at both the federal and state levels are routinely introduced to increase the dissemination of research information on indoor air contaminants through their listing and the issuance of health advisories. These proposals also require a study of the effects of building ventilation systems on indoor air quality, require US-EPA to develop a strategy for dealing with indoor air contaminants based on various statutes authorizing US-EPA regulations, and encourage the assessment of air quality in buildings.

The dissemination of such health effects information, especially coupled with increased building assessments for the presence of indoor air contaminants, has the potential for creating erroneous public perceptions that the mere presence of a substance in a building creates a health hazard without regard to actual risk. Additional US-EPA regulations also have the potential for creating such a misperception.

While current California law does not authorize the California Air Resources Board to regulate indoor air quality, legislation has been introduced in the past to grant the Air Board this new regulatory authority. Past reports by the California Air Resources Board have compounded the problem by putting forward findings and recommendations that are not based on sound science.

CBPA POSITION

Building owners strive to have healthy environments in their facilities and recognize that providing assure a healthy indoor air quality environment for their employees and customers is to everyone's benefit.

CBPA supports developing standards for businesses that use market forces to motivate owners to continue to improve air quality in their buildings.

CBPA supports regulations that ensure appropriate responses to indoor air contaminants, and to minimize overreaction due to public misperceptions of actual health risk.

CBPA believes that information on the health effects of potential indoor air contaminants should be based on the latest scientific evidence.

Public agencies should provide information in a manner that contains complete information on the health risks of exposure levels typical in buildings, should compare such risks to other risks of everyday life, should indicate exposure levels at which no unreasonable health risk exists, and, at the same time, should describe suggested remedial measures, including their effectiveness, limitations, health risks, and cost.

Public agencies should provide information in a way that that does not unnecessarily stoke a crisis atmosphere surrounding IAQ problems, which tends to create pressure to remedy every deficiency immediately instead of establishing a prioritized, long-term approach to IAQ improvements.