

TEST ANSWERS: Indoor Air Quality Safety

1. Chemicals, dusts, moulds or fungi, bacteria, gases, vapours, and odours are all examples of indoor air contaminants that can cause indoor air quality problems.

a) True

b) False

RATIONALE: Indoor air quality problems result from interactions between building materials and furnishing, activities within the building, climate and building occupants. Examples of indoor air contaminants include chemicals, dusts, moulds, bacteria, gases, vapours or odours.

2. The following are examples of biological pollutants from living organisms that can affect your indoor air quality: (Circle all that apply)

a) Mould and fungi (usually from moisture)

b) Bacteria (such as legionella)

c) House dust mites from carpets, fabric, etc.

d) Carbon monoxide (CO)

e) Pet dander

RATIONALE: Mould and fungi, bacteria, house mites from carpets or fabrics, and pet dander are all examples of biological pollutants. However, carbon monoxide is an example of a chemical pollutant as it is a gas, vapour or particle air contaminant.

3. The most effective way to reduce indoor air pollution is to remove or reduce the source of contamination. One example of this is to make ventilation improvements to your home/building.

a) True

b) False

RATIONALE: Making ventilation improvements is one example to reduce indoor air pollution. You can do this by using fans to circulate the air, opening windows when smog levels are low, and be sure to keep the room vents open and clear of furniture or other things that impede air circulation. Other examples include house cleaning, improving air filtration, removing dampness from water leaks and mould, and reducing or removing smoking from the household or building.

4. All the following are symptoms linked to poor indoor air quality: (Circle all that apply)

a) Dryness and irritation of the eyes, nose, throat and skin

b) Headache

c) Fatigue

d) Shortness of breath

e) Dizziness

f) Nausea

RATIONALE: It is common for people to report eye dryness and irritation, headaches, fatigue, shortness of breath, dizziness and nausea when they are experiencing poor air quality. Generally their symptoms are noticed after several hours of exposure and feel better when they are away from the building for a significant period of time.

5. Residential indoor guidelines recommend short-term exposure limit of 1 hour for carbon monoxide at 28.6 mg/m³ (25 ppm).

a) True

b) False

RATIONALE: The short-term exposure limit of 1 hour at 28.6 mg/m³ and the long-term exposure limit of 24 hours at 11.5 mg/m³ are recommended for carbon monoxide.