

ASTHMA TIPS FOR CUSTODIANS

Cleaning Suggestions:

Carpeted rooms should be vacuumed daily. All other rooms should be vacuumed every other day with commercial efficiency particle arresting (HEPA) filter or cleaner.

Hard Floors are less likely to be an asthma trigger if kept clean. Dust with static electricity or mineral oil treated mops daily. Wet mops should be used weekly.

Bookshelves trap dust easily. Dust horizontal surfaces weekly, when students are not present in the classroom.

Cleaning Supplies contain chemicals that irritate students with asthma. Replace irritating cleaners with safer, effective alternatives when possible.

Pests should be controlled with Integrated Pest Management (IPM). This program focuses on preventing pests by minimizing the resources needed for survival in the school setting. This decreases the need for application of pesticides. When pests become problematic, alternatives are used prior to the application of pesticide.

Rugs should be removed where possible, and tile kept clean. Bare wood or tile floors are best for keeping asthma under control.

Carpet Squares trap dust. Clean them weekly. Avoid vacuuming when students are in school.

Curtains should be kept off windows where possible. If a valance is needed, synthetic rather than natural fibers are preferable. Curtains and valances should be washed twice yearly.

Shades are better than curtains, and should be washed with a damp cloth weekly.



MORE ASTHMA TIPS FOR CUSTODIANS

Heating and Cooling System:

Fan blade and front grate should be cleaned monthly. Face fan to blow out toward the window, thereby decreasing the amount of pollen and pollution brought into the classroom.

Towels should not be placed under window units to collect condensation. This is an excellent place for mold and bacteria to grow.

Air conditioner filters should be cleaned every two weeks.

Belt-Type Humidifiers should be avoided in the school setting.

Air Conditioners or dehumidifiers should be used to keep relative humidity in the classroom low, between 30-50%.

General Tips:

Identify areas in the school that may be contributing to indoor air pollution.

Participate on Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) management in your school, and help evaluate school air quality needs.

Determine with administration how well the current air quality program at your school works, and modify the plan as necessary.

Identify barriers to maintaining good indoor air quality.

Determine reasonable methods of eliminating environmental pollutants from the school facilities.

Use Integrated Pest Management Plans.



NATURAL CLEANING AGENTS *for an asthma-friendly classroom*

- White or apple cider vinegar removes mold, mineral deposits, and crayon marks.
- Baking soda is a good general cleaner that can be used as a rug deodorizer, or a refrigerator deodorizer.
- Baking soda followed by vinegar 1:1 solution to clean drains
- Club soda is a good spot remover.
- Use a vinegar solution or soap and water, mold remover, and cleaning agent.
- Use liquid rather than bar soap (mild or unscented) for hand washing.

Some cleaning products have strong fumes. Replace caps quickly, and use when students are not around, whenever possible.

Avoid using aerosol sprays with students around.

Make sure danger stickers are in place on all cleaning materials kept in the classroom. Keep such materials stored out of the reach of students.



Source: Chicago Public Schools