

Improving Your Air Quality

What are Organic Volatile Compounds?

Volatile organic Compounds (VOC's) are a large and diverse family of chemicals that contain carbon and hydrogen. They can be emitted into indoor air from a variety of sources including cigarette smoke, household products like air fresheners, new carpets, vehicle exhaust and building materials such as paint, varnish and glues.

What should the level of relative humidity be in my home?

The following table shows where the level of humidity should be at in your home:

Outside Temperature (0°F)	Recommended Relative Humidity
+20° and above	35% to 40%
+10°	30%
0°	25%
-10°	20%
-20°	15%

What are the possible consequences if the relative humidity is too high or too low in my home?

Low humidity in a home can cause dry skin, itching, static electricity. It can cause your mucous membranes in your nose and throat to dry out, increasing your susceptibility to colds and other respiratory illnesses. Your body moisture will evaporate quickly; you will feel chilled even with higher thermostat settings.

If the humidity in your home is too high, you will have constantly foggy windows. You may notice a musty odor in the air. Structural damage in a home may be caused by high levels of humidity for extended periods of time.

What can I do to improve the humidity in my home?

If the humidity levels in your home are too low, the very easy solution to this problem is to add a humidifier to your home. There are different types of humidifiers, ensure you are choosing the proper one for you home.

If the humidity levels in your home are too high, there are several things you can do.

- Stop using a humidifier or turn humidifier down
- In the summer, use a dehumidifier
- Install a fresh air intake duct – outside air will lower the humidity levels inside your home
- Use range and bathroom exhaust fans while cooking or bathing

General Tips to Improve the Overall Air Quality in your Home

- △ Let fresh air into your home
- △ Change your air filter once a month
- △ Ventilate rooms when painting
- △ Let new carpet air out
- △ Don't let people smoke inside
- △ Don't leave full garbage bags inside your home
- △ Have carpets & furnishing cleaned regularly
- △ Leave your fan on to circulate air
- △ Ensure clothes dryer is vented properly
- △ Control the humidity in your home
- △ Control the dust in your home
- △ Ensure solvents & cleaners are sealed properly
- △ Groom pets outside
- △ Deal quickly any mould that you are aware of
- △ Open windows while using cleaning products
- △ Clean your furnace/air conditioner coil regularly
- △ Ensure wood burning fireplaces are vented properly
- △ Don't leave paint cans open or leave wet paint brushes unattended