



2008 *Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools* National Excellence Award Application

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)

Instructions

Part 1: School System/District Information

Please provide all of the information requested in the table in the Excellence Award application.

Note: If the contact person for this application is not in school during the summer break, please provide additional contact information (e.g., cell phone, alternate contacts) to allow EPA to contact you if necessary about your application.

Part 2: Telling Your IAQ Story

To merit an *IAQ TFS* National Excellence Award, applicants need to tell the story of their IAQ management program in a way that demonstrates the program is comprehensive and effective. Specifically, EPA will look for evidence that:

- The critical components that lead to program effectiveness (i.e., the Six Key Drivers of School IAQ Program Success) are embodied in the school IAQ management program;
- An established system exists to ensure consistent and sustained action to identify, address, and prevent IAQ problems; and
- Evidence that the program is achieving results.

Writing Your IAQ Program's Story

In no more than five pages (double sided), tell us the best story you can about your school IAQ management program. We recommend that you organize your story into the following sections:

- Getting Started (addresses evaluation criteria 1, 2, and 3)
- Institutionalizing the IAQ Management Program (addresses evaluation criteria 4 and 6)
- Getting It Done – Responding to IAQ Concerns and Preventing Future IAQ Problems (addresses evaluation criteria 3, 4, and 6)
- Capturing Success – Evaluating Your IAQ Program (addresses evaluation criteria 5)

Tips on Writing an Effective Story:

- We strongly encourage you to review the *Envisioning Excellence* suite of materials available on the *IAQ TFS* Symposium Web site, www.iaqsymposium.com, for more information on the six key drivers, and for in-depth case studies about seven school districts with exemplary indoor air quality programs.
- To help the Review Panel recognize the elements that you feel most contributed to your program's success, you may want to call attention to key themes, critical moments, and turning points, by calling out particularly powerful quotes from program staff, school decision-makers, building occupants, or community members; highlighting key terms; or using headings in your text to call attention to specific information. To write an effective story, remember that it is important to demonstrate not only what you did, but how you did it and the effect of your actions.
- Carefully review the criteria that the Review Panel will use to evaluate your application. (Evaluation criteria may be found in the *IAQ Tools for Schools* National Excellence Award Application Process)



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Tips on Writing an Effective Story (continued):

document at www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/excellenceaward.html). Where possible, indicate if specific sections of your story address particular evaluation criteria. For example, under the heading “Getting Started,” if your story describes how you organized your program, developed your plan, and conducted your first round of IAQ assessments, you might list criteria 1 (Organize), 2 (Plan) and 3 (Assess) next to that heading.

Guiding Questions

You are not required to answer the questions below in your story. They are designed solely to help you write your story by prompting you to think about critical moments in your program’s history, your program infrastructure, and program results. Review the evaluation criteria to learn more about the details you should be sure to include in your story.

2a. Getting Started

In this section, tell the story of how your school system/district became involved with IAQ management and what specific actions led to the emergence of a formal IAQ management program.

Questions to Consider:

- What led you to launch an IAQ initiative? Did certain individuals or organizations prompt action in your school system/district? Did a specific event, such as an IAQ problem, training or education program, parent concern, or some other event lead to action?
- Who took what steps to build the momentum required to get an IAQ management program off the ground? Did your IAQ program have certain champions who took ownership for the initiative? If so, what made them champions—their positions, their passion, their knowledge, their messages? Did you secure senior management buy-in for the IAQ initiative to help launch your program? If so, how?
- What were the first action steps taken? Did you name an IAQ Coordinator and assemble a team? If so, who did you select and why? Did you establish policies and procedures for managing IAQ? If so, did you build on existing policies or establish new ones? How did you decide what your policies had to address?
- As you were getting started, did you establish a system that governs your IAQ actions? Did you assign specific responsibilities to individuals, teams, or departments? Does your program follow a set schedule or process? If so, how were those systems originally established?

2b. Institutionalizing the IAQ Management Program

In this section, describe how your program moved from the initiation phase to the implementation phase. Under Getting Started, you described how you launched your program. Now, tell the story of what you did to make sure your IAQ program took root in your school system/district.



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Questions to Consider:

- How did you build awareness of and support for your IAQ program?
- What did you ask people to do to support the program?
- Did you develop anything in writing to formalize your IAQ management policies, plans, and goals? If so, what?
- Did you prioritize your plans? If so, how did you select your top priority actions?
- Did you communicate information about your program (e.g., policies, plans) to school decision-makers, teachers, students, administrators, parents, others? If so, how?
- What does our school system/district do to ensure that IAQ management plans and goals are continually reviewed and revised? How do you keep your program up-to-date?

2c. Getting It Done – Responding to IAQ Concerns and Preventing Future IAQ Problems

In this section, describe what your program looks like in action. Tell us about the specific steps the program team takes to assess and respond to IAQ concerns as well as prevent potential IAQ problems before they can emerge. In this section, it may be particularly helpful to provide very specific examples that describe how your team responds to IAQ concerns from the moment a concern is raised to after the issue is resolved and what steps are taken on a regular basis to prevent problems.

Questions to Consider:

- Do you conduct facility assessments to collect IAQ information? If so, how often? Who conducts the assessments (i.e., the IAQ Coordinator, the IAQ team, school occupants, a panel of people, including teachers, students, staff)? Do you survey building occupants, conduct visual assessments, or measure IAQ parameters (i.e., temperature, relative humidity, carbon dioxide)? Do you collect baseline and follow-up data on IAQ at your facilities?
- How do you usually learn of IAQ concerns? When IAQ concerns are registered, what steps do you take to respond? Do you prioritize your response to specific types of concerns and, if so, how? Do you communicate with the people who registered concerns?
- Does your IAQ management program take regular steps to prevent common problems? If so, what are the components of your prevention plan? Who is responsible for taking what actions under that plan?
- Does your school or school system/district allocate resources to ensure preventive IAQ management? If so, describe how those resources are allocated (e.g., time and money for training staff, maintaining equipment, undertaking major renovation or replacement programs).
- How do you communicate with the school community when an IAQ problem has been identified? How do you communicate with the school community about preventing IAQ problems, prevention activities, and short-and long-term plans for IAQ management? Do you educate school staff, teachers, parents, and others about IAQ issues? If so, how?



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2d. Capturing Success – Evaluating Your IAQ Program

In this section, describe how you evaluate the effectiveness of your IAQ management program and how you communicate your results to your stakeholders. If possible, use data you have collected to demonstrate that your program is having an impact.

Questions to Consider:

- How are the number, nature, and severity of IAQ concerns tracked over time?
- Do you monitor your implementation plan to ensure that standard operating procedures for responding to and preventing IAQ issues are implemented as planned?
- Can you link your IAQ management efforts to specific outcomes, such as changes over time in the number of school nurse visits, asthma attacks, comfort complaints, absences, union actions, workers compensation claims, community trust and support? If so, how?
- Can you estimate the investment you have made to support your IAQ program? Have you tracked the outcomes of those investments to measure your return on investment? If so, describe the return on your IAQ investments.
- Can you demonstrate improvement in facility IAQ over time? If so, how?
- Does your IAQ program have a mechanism for regularly sharing information about the program's progress and results with the school community? If so, what mechanisms are used?
- Do you share what you have learned about IAQ management with other school systems/districts? If so, how?

PART 3: SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Applicants may attach supplemental materials that document or provide additional support for the information in the application if they are:

- Clearly titled, referenced, and their relevance is explained in the body of the application. Materials that are not referenced, explained, and given a title will not be considered during the evaluation. Examples of supplemental materials may include: IAQ policies, articles, or descriptions of news media or video spotlights, etc.; and
- Not in excess of five double-sided or 10 single-sided additional pages of information.

All application and supplemental materials for the 2008 *IAQ TFS* National Excellence Award must be received or postmarked by **September 12, 2008**, in order to be evaluated.



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The application is a fill-in form, which will allow you to type your answers directly into the form, save what you have filled in on your computer, and submit it electronically via e-mail.

| IAQ Coordinator Contact Information | |
|---|--|
| School System/District Name | |
| Name(s) of IAQ Coordinator or IAQ Team Members (if necessary, please include an additional sheet listing all IAQ Team members.) | |
| Title | |
| Department | |
| Address | |
| City, State, Zip Code | |
| Telephone | |
| Fax Number | |
| E-mail Address | |
| School System/District Profile | |
| Total Number of Students | |
| Total Number of Staff | |
| Total Number of Facilities in Your System/District (e.g., 45 schools, five educational support buildings) | |
| Age Range of All System/District Facilities (e.g., five-90 years old) | |
| Total Square Footage (ft ²) of All System/District Facilities (e.g., 1.5 million ft ²) | |
| Total School District Budget | |
| Number of School Facilities in Your School System/District Participating in the IAQ TFS Program | |



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PARTICIPATION IN OTHER SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS

If applicable, please select any additional school-based federal or state voluntary projects or programs in which your school system participates.

- American Lung Association Open Airways for Schools
- Centers for Disease Control Environmental Tracking Project
- Clean School Bus USA
- Collaborative for High Performance Schools (CHPS)
- ENERGY STAR® for K-12 Schools
- Healthy School Environments Assessment Tool (HealthySEAT)
- SunWise for Schools
- School Chemical Cleanout Campaign (SC3)
- U.S. Green Building Council LEED for Schools
- WasteWise School Program
- Other _____

If applicable, please list any community partners or other organizations that have assisted you in implementing your IAQ management program.



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