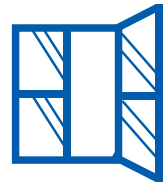
Indoor Air Quality and Health in FEMA Temporary Housing

For Trailer Residents

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is responding to your concerns about air quality and formaldehyde in FEMA trailers.

You can take these steps to improve your indoor air quality:



1. Breathe fresh air

- **Open windows** when you can to let in fresh air.
- **Spend as much time as you can outside,** in fresh air.

2. Control mold

- **Clean your bathroom and kitchen** often to fight mold.
- **Fix any water leaks** in your trailer.
- **Clean up any mold you see or smell** with a mix of no more than 1 cup of bleach mixed with 1 gallon of water. Never mix bleach with ammonia.
- **Close windows and run your air conditioner (AC) or your dehumidifier** to help control mold. This will reduce dampness that helps mold grow.

3. Other ways to improve the air in your trailer

- **Clean often** to get rid of dust and pet fur, which can bother your nose and throat.
- **Try not to use bug sprays.** When used in small spaces like FEMA trailers, the poisons that kill bugs also can bother your nose and throat or make you sick.
- **Do not smoke inside.** Tobacco smoke contains chemicals that can bother your nose and throat and make you or anyone else who breathes it sick.

Who is most likely to get sick from bad indoor air?

- People with asthma
- People with allergies
- People with lung disease such as bronchitis or emphysema
- People with heart problems or disease
- Children
- Elderly people

How do I know if I've been exposed to formaldehyde?

If you have been exposed to formaldehyde you'll have symptoms like those caused by mold or tobacco smoke:

- Eye, nose and throat irritation (burning, itching, tearing, and sore throat)
- Skin rash
- Chest tightness, coughing and shortness of breath

These can also be symptoms of flu or allergies. If you have these symptoms, please see a doctor, if you can.

What is CDC doing to help you?

CDC is testing FEMA trailers and people to learn more about air quality in the trailers and how it affects health:

- We are testing the air in trailers for indoor air pollutants, including formaldehyde. CDC will test trailers in Louisiana and Mississippi. A computer will pick the trailers. Every trailer has the same chance of being picked. CDC cannot take volunteers for these tests.

- We are also working with FEMA trailer families to study children, chosen at random. We want to learn about health problems linked to indoor air quality. We should be able to give you the results from our tests next year (2008).

CDC will not be able to test every trailer or every child living in a FEMA trailer. We want to do our studies quickly so that we can answer your questions quickly.

To learn more

If you would like to know more about indoor air quality and health, please call us toll-free at

1-800-CDC-INFO.

If you have questions about moving out of your trailer, please call FEMA toll-free at

1-866-562-2381 or (TTY 1-800-462-7585).

About CDC

CDC is a federal public health agency based in Atlanta, GA. Our mission is to promote health and quality of life by preventing and controlling disease, injury and disability.