

Foreword

In the past two decades, the number of people requesting information and assistance on health and comfort concerns related to indoor air quality from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has risen steadily. Although many studies on indoor air quality have been reported in technical publications and proceedings during these years, little indoor air-related information has been targeted at owners and facility managers of public and commercial buildings who are the people in the best position to prevent and resolve indoor air problems.

In recognition of the need for practical indoor air quality advice for building owners and facility managers, EPA and NIOSH decided to work jointly to produce written guidance on preventing, identifying, and correcting indoor air quality problems. The distinct perspectives of the two agencies are reflected in this document.

Since 1971, NIOSH has conducted more than 600 indoor air quality investigations in the office (non-industrial, non-residential) buildings under the Health Hazard Evaluation Program. Over time, NIOSH has developed a "solution-

oriented" approach to these investigations. This document draws extensively on the experience of NIOSH in investigating and correcting indoor air quality problems in these types of buildings.

In 1986, Congress mandated that EPA conduct research and develop information on indoor air quality. To carry out its information dissemination responsibilities, EPA's Indoor Air Division has produced a number of publications which have been distributed to a wide range of audiences and will launch an indoor air quality information clearinghouse in 1992. In addition, the Indoor Air Division is developing several guidance documents on building design and management practices. This publication is part of that effort.

The guidance presented here is based on what is known and generally accepted *at this time* in the relevant fields of building science and indoor air quality. EPA and NIOSH anticipate that this document may later be revised to include more detailed guidance as research continues and our knowledge grows. In the meantime, building owners and facility managers can use the Resources section to supplement and update the information presented here.