



# Background Information for Walkthrough Inspection Checklist

A school walkthrough by the Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Team is an integral part of IAQ management. It is an eye-opening educational experience for anyone interested in the environmental health of the building. The walkthrough should not be an intensive, detailed, or costly inspection. Instead, it is a quick overview of the conditions that can affect the school's IAQ. While some schools wait until the initial parts of the *IAQ TJS* Program have been completed, others have had success “jump-starting” their program by beginning with a quick walkthrough. Request the participation of someone who is familiar with the operation of the building, such as a facility operator or custodian.

During the walkthrough, use your senses:

**Look** at the general level of cleanliness in classrooms and mechanical rooms. Watch for potential pollutant sources including mold, improperly stored chemicals, or excessively dirty air filters and ducts. Look for signs of water damage, which may point to an underlying problem. Water damage increases the chance of biological contamination. Look for books or papers on top of unit ventilators or plywood covering outdoor air intakes.

**Smell** for unique or objectionable odors—including mold, mildew, and “chemical” smells—as you move from room to room. Note any potential sources of these odors.

**Feel** for uncomfortable air temperatures, drafts, and high or low humidity. Check for air flowing into and out of grilles and air vents.

**Listen** to the concerns of school occupants regarding IAQ. Do they experience any IAQ-related symptoms in classrooms? Do they store and use their own sprays to control pests? Do they turn off the unit ventilator during class because it is too noisy? Listen for unusual equipment noises that may indicate potential problems.

A complete walkthrough inspection incorporates the entire school, including specialty areas such as cafeterias, art rooms, and industrial arts areas.

## EXTERIOR INSPECTION

Begin the walkthrough inspection outside. Look for anything that might impact the air indoors. Considerations include ventilation inlets, outdoor sources of pollution (e.g., dumpsters, vehicle exhaust, pesticides), site drainage, holes in the building shell, the condition of the roof, and evidence of pests. Use the checklist as a guide and note any relevant observations on it or on a plan of the school.

### Vehicles on School Grounds

Vehicles on school grounds can expose students and staff to exhaust emissions. Identify areas where vehicles (buses, delivery trucks) may idle and ensure that they are far away from school air intakes. Determine the transportation needs and usage at your school—how students and staff get to school, the number of cars, buses, walkers, and bicycles, etc. Assess if buses and/or cars tend to idle in areas where students congregate (near playgrounds or in front of the school building). Many problems can be eliminated simply by not allowing vehicles to idle and by relocating delivery and pick-up areas.

## INTERIOR INSPECTION

Continue the walkthrough inspection inside. Look for noticeable temperature and humidity concerns; indications that the ventilation system is functioning; general cleanliness; evidence of pollutant sources, including mold and mildew; and anything else that might impact the air indoors. Use the checklist as a guide and note any relevant observations on it or on a floor plan of the school.

### Instructions

Read this section before completing the Walkthrough Inspection Checklist.