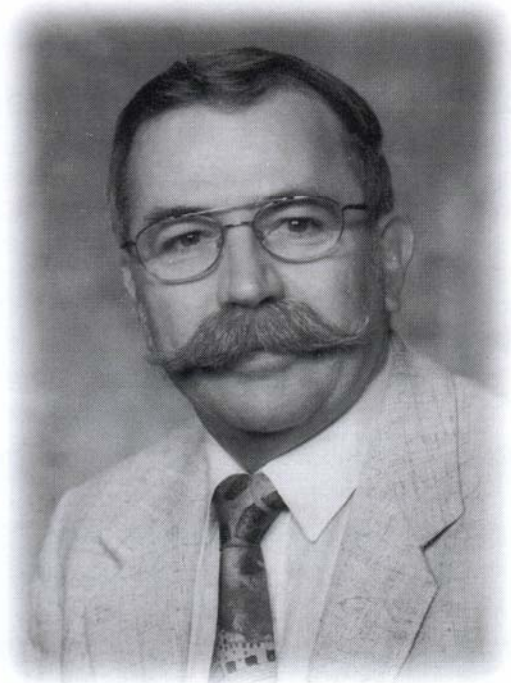


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Apex

Big Enough To Help...Small Enough To Care



how clean is your air?

We spend most of our quality time at home, so it's important to manage the quality of the air we breathe. There are a wide range of options designed to

create and protect a healthy air environment. To determine which is best suited to your needs, you must understand your tolerance for the various types of allergens or irritants in the air. Although it's difficult to determine how serious one should be in guarding against them, it's helpful to at least understand the common sources of airborne pollutants and the various treatment options.

air problems can come from almost anywhere

Poor Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) is the result of pollutants being introduced into, or released from, the interior home environment. For those with medical conditions, such as skin or eye irritations, or breathing difficulties, maintaining good IAQ can be important. Here is a list of common sources of potential irritants often brought into the home by its occupants:

- ◆ Paints, solvents, caulking, stain protector, fire retardant, etc.
- ◆ Cleaning agents, detergents, fabric softeners, furniture polish, sprays, etc.
- ◆ Nail polish, perfumes, make-up, etc.
- ◆ Furnishings, carpeting, drapery, blankets, fabrics, clothing, cushions, bedding, etc.
- ◆ Plants (indoor and outdoor), plant mold, fertilizers, pesticides, fungicides, etc.
- ◆ Fireplaces, cooking units, candles, car exhaust, industrial smog, etc.

biological and chemical irritations

Air contaminants can be divided into two categories: biological (associated with natural, living organisms) and chemical (associated with synthetic materials and natural gases). Generally speaking, you can get rid of biological contaminants by destroying or altering their habitats (e.g. reducing humidity to inhibit mold spores,

cleaning fabrics and floors to combat dust mites). Chemical contaminants may be more difficult to detect and eradicate, particularly if they are emitting from the home's structural materials (e.g. old insulation, pressboard walls, pipes, etc.). Sometimes renovations are required to eliminate such contaminants.

what to do to get cleaner air

Many homeowners don't know how to improve their indoor air quality. While they may have no control over pollutants that come from outside, (especially if they live downwind from an industrial area), they can remove or at least minimize the pollution once it has found its way into their home. The three possible methods for dealing with poor IAQ are: disposal, ventilation, and effective filtering or air cleaning.

At the very least, you should protect your IAQ by keeping your home well ventilated and by maintaining your home's comfort system in order to ensure that it operates effectively and efficiently.

Consider changing or upgrading air filters, pads and screens from air conditioning units, heaters or furnaces, vacuum cleaners, humidifiers, etc. When replacing filters, look for a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter rating. Bear in mind that most air conditioning or furnace filters will remove particles, but will not "clean" the air. To do so requires activated charcoal or alumina filters, often operated under a separate air quality system.

If you have air ducts, you may choose to have them cleaned, although that may not be an effective measure of improving air quality. (If you decide to proceed, be sure to choose a reputable firm that does not use chemicals.)

Other measures that help improve IAQ include getting rid of carpeting, and replacing bedding and upholstery coverings with hypoallergenic fabrics.

breathing easier

If you have implemented the basic suggestions on how to improve IAQ, but still have concerns about IAQ, it may be advisable to have your air tested to identify troublesome pollutants. An IAQ professional can detect many threatening airborne pollutants. But, before you hire an IAQ investigator, ask for references, get advice from various health groups or municipal departments about local contaminants, and sign a contract that specifies your concerns and how they will be addressed.



planning your 2007 makeover project

If you are planning a major home renovation in 2007, you should carefully consider the wisdom of the project based on the following key points:

- 1 The property's current market value (without renovation).
- 2 The cost of the project.
- 3 The benefits of the project to the current users.
- 4 The property's market potential (with renovation).
- 5 Future market considerations.

In other words, when planning a major renovation, you should take into consideration your home's present worth and its future value. If you need assistance, call for an objective, professional real estate evaluation of these factors so you can make the right decision.

protect your home from invasion

Many people worry about keeping their possessions safe while they are away from home, but fail to take similar precautions when they are at home - even though there is a lot more at stake than mere possessions. Remember... burglars may look for vulnerable homes, but robbers look for vulnerable people.

Reduce the risk of a home invasion by following these common-sense tips:

- ◆ Always keep your doors locked... home invaders tend to "burst" in, rather than "sneak" in.
- ◆ Keep your windows secure at night, when robbers are more reliant upon stealth.
- ◆ Always keep your alarm system activated, and program "911" on all home phones and all cell phones with speed-dial features.
- ◆ Make sure all family members are aware that doors not in use should be locked at all times. Consider an alarm system that tells you if doors or windows are open.
- ◆ Never program voicemail to answer with a response like "we're not home" or "I'm not here". Instead, say "No one is able to answer right now".
- ◆ Keep outside areas well lit right through the night, especially if not visible from street or traffic.
- ◆ Get to know your neighbors, and agree to keep "all eyes" on each others' homes for extra security, and be watchful for unusual street activity.

Think, Act... Live!

*"Strength and confidence comes from within... it is there all the time." **Anna Freud***

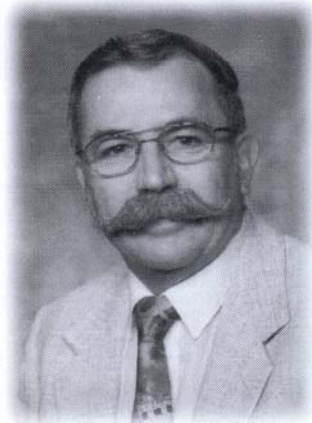
*"Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves." **James Barrie***

*"Those who jump to conclusions often fall." **Mark J. Ottaviani***

*"Every success is built on the ability to do better than good enough." **Unknown***

*"A day will never be any more than what you make of it." **Josh S. Hinds***

Best Wishes to You!



The New Year is always a good time to be optimistic about the future. Knowing that so many of my clients allowed me to help them over the past year or referred me to their friends or relatives, helps me feel optimistic about the coming year. It's great to know I have such terrific clients! Thank you!

Looking forward, I'd like to wish you and your family excellent health, plenty of happiness and continuous prosperity throughout 2007...
Happy New Year!

If you want up-to-date statistical data for your street and area, please call.

Call JC Van Der Walt today for all your Real Estate needs.
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