Breathe Easy: Take Steps to Improve Your Indoor Air Quality

Your house could actually be making it hard for you to breathe. Asthma, allergies, colds and other respiratory illnesses can all be exacerbated by poor indoor air quality. Indoor air pollutants can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, headaches, dizziness and fatigue. Indoor air pollutants can also lead to pneumonia and depression.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the air indoors can be as much as 100 times more polluted than outside. And the average home collects roughly two pounds of dust each week.

Sources of indoor air pollution include heating and tobacco products; asbestos-containing insulation, wet or damp carpet, and cabinetry or furniture made of certain pressed wood products; products for household cleaning, personal care or hobbies; central heating and cooling systems, and humidification devices; and radon, pesticides and outdoor air pollution.

Now that winter is nearly upon us, we’ll be spending more time inside, and we’re more likely to pass bugs to each other than if we were spending time in the sunshine. Whenever your kids come home from school with the sniffles or your significant other brings home a cold from the office, you’ll be more likely to get sick yourself if the air you’ve been breathing all day contains pollutants. Children are extremely vulnerable to harmful pollutants because they have a tendency to breathe them in but not expel them. AirNow takes a scientific approach to improving your indoor air quality. From particle counters to carbon monoxide monitors, we have the tools to measure the levels of volatile organic compounds and other pollutants in your home. And we know there’s more than one solution to improve your air quality, such as filters and ultraviolet lights, humidifiers and dehumidifiers. From improved filtration to indoor air cleaning, we have numerous products to help. Call to learn more.

ASK THE EXPERT

Q: I heard that the air inside my home can be more harmful to my health than the great outdoors. Is this true and is there something I can do about it?

A. Indoor air pollutants are more prevalent than you may realize. Research conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency has shown that the quality of indoor air can often be much worse than that of outdoor air. Indoor pollutants can cause or contribute to short- and long-term health problems, including asthma, allergic reactions, congestion, sneezing, headaches, coughing, eye and skin irritations, nausea, fatigue, respiratory tract infections and dizziness.

The pollutants found within your home that can contribute to what is alluding you include dust, animal dander, pollen, smoke, chemical vapors from finishes and cleaning solutions, moisture problems and poor humidity levels in homes can also lead to potential health risks. It not only affects the oxygen levels in air we breathe, but can also affect the mold, viruses and bacteria that are present in our home. Mold and bacteria thrive in humidity levels above 60 percent, whereas viruses thrive at humidity levels below 40 percent.

Removing the irritants from your home can reduce or even eradicate the aggravating symptoms brought on by indoor air pollutants, allowing you to breathe freely in your home. Frequent vacuuming and dusting can improve your indoor air, but the smallest particles that cause the most irritation are best remedied with filtering devices. Electronic air cleaners and filters will trap and filter pollutants from passing through your heating and air conditioning system and circulating throughout your home.

Have a question for the AirNow experts? Logon to AirNowHVAC.com and click on “contact us” to submit your questions.

Football Season is Food Season

Whether you’re tailgating at the game or enjoying it with family and friends in the comfort of your own home, getting ready involves food. Planning and preparing in advance won’t lead your team to victory but will ensure you want miss out on any of the fun with your guests by being stuck in the kitchen. Below you’ll find a quick and easy recipe to enjoy on your game day.

Angela’s Spicy Buffalo Wings

Cool down these kicked-up wings with ranch sauce and celery sticks.

Yield: Makes 4 servings

Total time: 55 minutes

Ingredients:
- 2 1/2 pounds chicken wing pieces (wings already cut)
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon onion powder
- 3/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 teaspoons cayenne pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- Vegetable oil
- Spicy buffalo sauce
- Cool ranch sauce
- Celery and carrot sticks

Preparation:
1. Sprinkle wings with salt and next 3 ingredients. Dredge in flour, shaking to remove excess.
2. Pour oil to depth of 2 inches into a large deep skillet; heat to 350°. Fry wings, in batches, 3 to 4 minutes on each side or until done. Drain on a wire rack over paper towels.
3. Toss wings in spicy buffalo sauce; serve immediately with cool ranch Sauce and celery sticks.