

Humidifiers – Guidance Document



With regard to **humidifiers**, the Indoor Air Quality Office (IAQ) does not stock or provide these to schools for the following reasons. According to the EPA:

- Microorganisms often grow in humidifiers which are equipped with tanks containing standing water.
- Humidifiers can disperse airborne microorganisms (e.g., bacterial and fungal organisms) from their water tanks.
- Breathing mist containing these pollutants has been implicated in causing a condition known as Humidifier Fever.
- Humidifiers should be cleaned every third day to prevent the buildup of scale, deposits or film that has formed on the device.
- Even manual cleaning of contaminated reservoirs can cause exposure to allergens and pathogens.

In general, portable humidifiers are designed for room-size usage in a residential setting and are not large enough to adequately humidify a classroom-size environment.

Given these concerns about humidifiers, the IAQ Office does not advocate the use of these devices. If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me at 240-740-2325. Thank you.

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