

# About Ventilation Standards

2000

According to current minimum standards for indoor air quality, it is acceptable if up to 20% of adult building occupants are unsatisfied.

Tang Lee, Professor of Building Science, University of Calgary tells us, "The Canadian building code references ASHRAE 62-1989 Ventilation for Acceptable Indoor Air Quality. Applying this standard to students in a school is questionable. This standard is based on tests that found that 80% of at least 20 untrained subjects perceived the air to be acceptable in 15 minutes, or 15 seconds for unadapted subjects. The test was conducted primarily on students at Yale University, Kansas State University and Denmark. It did not test babies, children, the elderly, the infirm or sick, physically and mentally disabled, those with respiratory illness, and many other disenfranchised people. Thus the standard may only be valid for a much small segment of the total population. Furthermore, this test is based primarily on elevated carbon dioxide in the test room and the perceived discomfort of the untrained subjects. None of the harmful contaminants such as formaldehyde, carbon monoxide, moulds, radon, etc. were used. The ASHRAE standard for ventilation is clearly not applicable to all occupants. ASHRAE states, 'Considering the diversity of indoor air contaminants and the range of susceptibility in the population, compliance may not be acceptable for everyone.' We should be using housing standards in our schools."

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