Viruses and Humidity

Relative humidity (RH), or the amount of moisture in the air, can affect a virus’s ability to survive in an environment. In certain conditions, viruses and other respiratory irritants thrive. **Viruses, like COVID-19, tend to function better in environments that are too dry and too moist.** Keeping your home in the 40-60% RH range, along with frequently cleaning your home and washing your hands, will lead to less spread of the virus.

### How to know your relative humidity:

- **Use a hygrometer.** A hygrometer is a device you can purchase that will tell you the RH of the area, and if your home is too dry or too moist.

- **Indicators of RH:**
  - **Sweaty windows.** If your windows are sweaty, your home is too moist. Turn on fans, or open a window or door for a little bit to let the moisture out and fresh air in.
  - **Static electricity.** If you get shocked a lot in your home, that is an indication that it is too dry. Use a humidifier or boil water on the stove to increase humidity. If your windows get sweaty, turn off the humidifier, stop boiling water.

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**Note:** ANTHC usually advises occupants to keep their RH between 30-50%. This is the range for keeping respiratory irritants, like mold, at a minimum in AK. Right now, we are focused on reducing the spread of COVID-19. 40-60% RH is best for limiting the spread of viruses like COVID-19.

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**Image Description:**

- **Table:**
  - **Relative Humidity (RH)**: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100
  - **Conditions:**
    - Viruses
    - Bacteria
    - Fungi
    - Respiratory Infections
    - Mites
    - Allergic Rhinitis and Asthma

- **Chart:**
  - **Too Dry**
  - **Healthy Zone**
  - **Too Moist**

**Note:** A decrease in bar height indicates a decrease in effect for each of the items.