

# Tribal Air Quality Program



## The Do's & Don'ts for Healthy Indoor Air Quality

It is extremely important to practice routine hand washing and household cleaning to decrease the spread of viruses, bacteria and other germs. It is also important to conduct safe indoor air quality practices to help keep respiratory illnesses as low as possible while at home.

**Tip: Many cleaning / disinfectant chemicals and methods can be severe triggers with those who have respiratory (lung/breathing) illnesses, especially with asthma and COPD. If using chemicals to disinfect, have those with illnesses retreat to a separate room and use whatever ventilation is possible when using chemical cleaners (bathroom fan, windows, doors, etc.).**

### The Don'ts:

- **DO NOT** spray chemical disinfectants on yourself or others
- **DO NOT** spray chemical disinfectants on masks
- **DO NOT** use cleaners and disinfectants for other than their intended use
- **DO NOT** let children handle any cleaners, chemicals, or pesticides
- **DO NOT** mix cleaners together (example: bleach and ammonia), mixing can offset dangerous toxic gases

### The DO's:

- Regularly wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Use **ventilation** when using cleaning chemicals
- Keep all cleaners and chemicals out of reach of children
- Conduct routine cleaning (*washing bedding, clothes, surfaces before disinfecting, vacuuming, etc.*)
- Regularly disinfect "high touch" areas (*faucets, phones, remotes, electronic devices, doorknobs, refrigerator handles, bathrooms, toys, etc.*)
  - Wear gloves when disinfecting
  - When disinfecting surfaces, clean with soap and water first (*Disinfectants are not as effective when surfaces are soiled*)
  - Leave surfaces wet for **10** minutes to kill germs then wipe down with potable water where food contact may occur
- Read and follow all label instructions and precautions that should be followed (*wearing gloves, masks, etc.*) \* **Note: If not diluted properly, bleach can result in the making of toxic substances**
- Keep all forms of smoking outside
- Burn only seasoned, dry wood (*no garbage, treated wood, etc.*)
- Make sure carbon monoxide and smoke detectors have batteries and are functioning

- Keep indoor humidity levels between 30-50% (*hygrometers can help you determine your home humidity. Too low and too high humidity levels increase bacteria, virus, and dust mite growth*)
- Fix leaks and drips
- Consider purchasing a HEPA air cleaner or make your own (*see instructions for making your own air cleaner on the ANTHC Air and Healthy Homes website: (<https://anthc.org/what-we-do/community-environment-and-health/healthy-homes/>)*)
- When possible, increase the fresh air in your home by opening windows or doors in rooms to dilute airborne pollutants



**To learn More on Indoor Air Quality for Rural Alaska:**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WPIWH40nvTA&t=57s>

**Additional Resources:**

- **Department of Health Bleach Recommendations:** <https://www.info.gov.hk/info/sars/en/useofbleach.htm>
- **CDC:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/cleaning-disinfection.html>
- **EPA Indoor Air Quality:** <https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq>
- **ANTHC Air and Healthy Homes:** <https://anthc.org/what-we-do/community-environment-and-health/healthy-homes/>
- **Tribal Healthy Homes Network:** <http://thhnw.org/resources/>