

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Avoid Indoor Air Pollution

(NAPSA)—Many Americans may be breathing easier once they learn how simple it can be to keep their homes cleaner and more comfortable.

Airborne contaminants such as mold can be a big headache for homeowners. Research published in the *Annals of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology* suggests that cleaning air ducts can go a long way toward reducing them.

What The Scientists Did

An independent lab and a team of allergists experimented in several houses, summer and winter, following four steps:

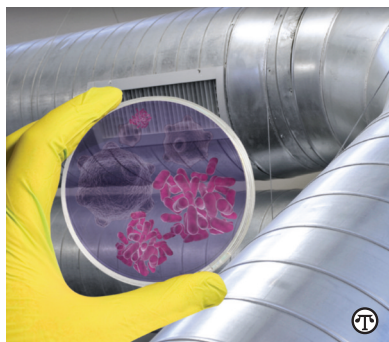
1. Cleaned the air ducts and the rest of the heating and cooling system;
2. Applied a chemical to treat microbial contaminants, such as mold;
3. Sealed the ducts to close up leaks; and
4. Installed an electrostatic filter to keep the system clean.

The results were excellent: They reduced microbial contaminants by 84 to 92 percent. According to the study, excess moisture in the heating and cooling system is the main cause of fungal contamination.

What You Can Do

The experts at the National Air Duct Cleaners Association (NADCA), which certifies heating and cooling cleaning professionals, recommend maintenance procedures that reflect these practices. They suggest you:

- Inspect your air ducts. Use a small mirror and flashlight or digital camera to take a picture. If



Cleaning your heating and cooling system regularly can help keep your home mold-free.

there is visible dust, dirt or debris, you should have your air ducts cleaned.

- On a regular basis, clean your entire heating and cooling system—not only the air ducts but the coils and other components of the furnace. These get dirty over time.

- Use a good filter. If you're not sure, talk to the heating and cooling technician who comes out to your house to service the system.

- Work with a qualified contractor. Having the job done right can save considerable time and money.

These steps can go a long way in helping you improve the quality of the air in your home, while also saving you a considerable amount of money by using less energy. This also helps the environment.

Learn More

For more information or to find a NADCA member nearby, visit www.nadca.com or call (202) 737-2926.