

# EPA Clean Air Guidelines: Purification and Communication

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The people at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) understand better than most on how important it is to keep the air we breathe clean. Without proper ventilation and purification, even something as innocuous as the air can pose an immense health risk by transmitting pollutants and infectious particles.

In March of 2022, the EPA released the [Clean Air Buildings Challenge](#) to encourage the owners and operators of buildings nationwide to provide safer, cleaner air for their occupants. Meeting this challenge will require planning, strategy, and outreach from healthcare business leaders. If handled correctly, doing so will ensure occupant safety and building value while future-proofing for the next pandemic.

## Strategize

Airflow may seem second-nature and predictable, but controlling the way air moves through a space takes specific understanding of that movement, and how the layout, shape, and ventilation system of a space can improve or damage its efficiency. Healthcare business personnel should carefully assess their property's airflow, as well as the efficiency and organization of their heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.

Once the owners and their teams understand how their building brings in fresh outdoor air and expels stale air, it should be easy to diagram the ventilation system to best distribute CO2 monitors, and new or upgraded ventilators to make the airflow process safer and more efficient.

## Filter

To properly meet the EPA's challenge, medical facilities especially must provide the very cleanest air possible. Nobody in the healthcare industry needs to be told that airborne diseases like COVID-19 fly around on tiny liquid particles too small for most air filtration systems to clean.

Many medical buildings already use surgical-strength air filters in rooms where sensitive procedures take place, but to truly guarantee clean air, such high-performance filtration systems should be installed throughout the building.

Top-of-the-line filtration is the backbone of a clean air plan. The positioning and strength of each air filter is a key consideration in how to arrange the flow of clean air through a space and ensure maximum cleansing of any dangerous infected particulates. By customizing their filtration strategy and HVAC system around air filters, healthcare business personnel can guarantee their space is as safe as possible.

## Flow

To get the most out of good filtration equipment, medical facility managers and business leaders should position these devices for best coverage. To do that, it is important for airflow strategies to account for which windows will be kept open to draw in clean air and which to release stale air. In locations like hospitals, where leaving windows open is not advisable, filtration inflow and outflow vents should be positioned for best airflow.

Airflow should always be directed in such a way as to never blow cold drafts or unfiltered air onto ill and immunocompromised people. Since medical facilities will obviously host a larger-than-average number of such occupants, it is doubly vital to use as much top-tier filtration as is necessary to minimize their exposure to unfiltered air.

## Educate

In order to meet the EPA's benchmarks, all these measures require the full participation of a facility's staff and occupants. Healthcare business leadership means educating everyone who works at a medical location on how best to facilitate clean airflow and maximum filtration in that space.

Regular outreach, training sessions, and walkthroughs will ensure everyone knows how to play their part. One excellent way to keep people engaged is to encourage and act on feedback, as people considering how to improve a system are invested in that system.

Clean, purified air should be a key concern for healthcare business administrators, given the impact of COVID-19. With new strains of the Coronavirus or entirely new airborne diseases potentially waiting in the wings, an aggressive and thorough approach to air purification would be necessary even without the EPA's challenge. With the challenge in place, however, healthcare business personnel should feel especially motivated to make this the time they meet and exceed their clean air goals.



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