HOME RENOVATION IAQ CHECKLIST

Renovating your home can be a very exciting time, but it is also filled with many decisions. What color paint? What type of fixtures? What kind of flooring? But, have you stopped to think about how the renovation will impact your home's indoor air quality? Use the checklist below as a guide to finding low-emitting products, which will help reduce indoor air pollution in your home, and help ensure the air you and your family breathe is healthier.

DRYWALL

You might not realize it, but drywall–particularly the type that has been treated for mold and moisture resistance–can be one of the biggest sources of airborne chemicals in a home. Fortunately, the GREENGUARD Product Guide offers homeowners free access to dozens of drywall products that have been certified for low chemical emissions. Visit www.greenguard.org to start your search.

Once you've selected your drywall, be sure to protect it from moisture. During installation, seal off the area with plastic curtains and install filters on your air vents and intakes. This will help prevent the spread of dust. When finishing the drywall, always wear a dust mask, and consider using fans to blow accumulated dust out the window.

FLOORING

Much like drywall, flooring can have a major impact on indoor air quality due to its large surface area: the larger a product's surface area, the more volatile organic compounds (VOCs) it is likely to release. If your home renovation includes new flooring, be sure to look for hardwood, laminate or tile flooring that is GREENGUARD Certified. Get a head start on your search by visiting www.greenguard.org. Alternatively, opt for carpet that is Green Label Plus Certified by the Carpet and Rug Institute.

INSULATION

Insulation products can not only emit potentially toxic chemicals, but they can also create an airtight "seal" around your home, trapping airborne contaminants inside. GREENGUARD Certified insulation products can be healthier options for your home because they are certified to be low-emitting, meaning they can contribute to the creation of healthier indoor environments. Find them at www.greenguard.org.

PAINTS / ADHESIVES / SEALANTS

Interior paint can pollute the indoor air by releasing potentially hazardous chemicals both during and after application. In fact, even some so-called “no VOC” and “low VOC” paints can contribute to indoor air pollution. That’s because “no VOC” and “low VOC” typically refer to paint’s VOC content (i.e., grams per liter), not its chemical emissions.

GREENGUARD Certified paints have been tested for use indoors and are certified to meet some of the world’s most stringent indoor chemical emissions limits. Peruse the many brands of certified paint on the free GREENGUARD Product Guide at www.greenguard.org.

FURNITURE

Once structural renovations are complete, use caution when selecting the types of furniture and décor you bring into your home. Engineered wood, wood finishes and upholstered materials tend to be prolific sources of VOCs, such as formaldehyde. Whenever possible, opt for solid wood furniture over pressed wood furniture. If this isn’t possible, allow the furniture to off-gas, or air out, outdoors or in a space that’s not heavily occupied for at least two weeks before bringing it inside.

If you choose to use antique painted furniture, be aware that the paint may contain lead. If you decide to refinish the furniture, avoid sanding it (as this will release lead dust) and use only certified low-emitting finishes and paints, which you can find at www.greenguard.org.

VENTILATION

Make sure to ventilate the area that’s being renovated. If possible, leave windows and doors open and “flush out” the contaminated air with fans. Be sure to cover up or close-off your home’s HVAC system ducts to avoid spreading polluted air to other parts of your home.

FLUSH OUT

After renovation is complete, allow your home to air out prior to use. Again, this is as easy as opening windows and doors and placing fans in windows to force the polluted air out. If possible, try doing this for at least two days, but any amount of time is better than no time!

CLEANING

Cleaning is an important part of creating and maintaining a home with good indoor air quality. However, many cleaning products that give off the telltale “clean smell”—such as pine or citrus fragrances—can worsen indoor air quality and expose you and your family to hundreds of potentially harmful airborne chemicals. Choose ECOLOGO Certified cleaning products, or try cleaning with a little baking soda or vinegar.

Remember, the world’s most comprehensive database of certified low-emitting products is available for free, at any time, at www.greenguard.org. You’ll also find an abundance of information about indoor air quality and additional tips to create healthier indoor air for you and your family.

GREENGUARD
PRODUCT CERTIFIED FOR LOW CHEMICAL EMISSIONS
UL.COM/GG
UL 2818

For more than 100 years, UL has helped create healthier living spaces by certifying products and materials. Now we are helping to reduce chemical exposure through our GREENGUARD Certification Program. www.greenguard.org

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