

IAQ: Breathing Free and Safe Around Construction Projects



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from the clinic setting at the Dental School, to a very busy small animal clinic at the Cummings Veterinary School. Other examples include a dining hall kitchen, a humid mechanical room or a busy research laboratory. However the most common work environment is the office.

Keeping these work environments safe lies with the individual departments and schools. However assisting with this is the competent and often underappreciated Facilities Services Department and the Construction Project Managers.

With a number of both major and minor construction projects currently on all three Tufts campuses the potential impact on our offices can range from a small nuisance to a major indoor air quality (IAQ) problem.

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Generally, it is the universities policy to review safety concerns and issues well before construction begins. Then steps are taken to ensure that issues are mitigated adjoining work spaces are safe and impact to these areas are minimized. However unexpected incidents can happen. A classic example is, the building next to your office is getting a new roof. Unexpectedly, the wind picks up and the roof chemical odors are drawn into your buildings ventilation system. Although often not a significant hazard, the resulting odor can be pungent and unpleasant.

In the event of this type of incident, the first step is to contact the work order center on your campus to inform them of the issue and request an immediate response. Among other corrective actions Facilities Services may temporarily shut off the air intake to your floor or building to minimize the entry of pollutants.

If an issue is serious or you are unsure whether it's serious do not hesitate to contact Tufts Police at extension 6-6911 to get an immediate response.

With a large project such as the new Science and Engineering Building (SEC) underway in Medford, loud noises, vibrations and dust are inevitable and cannot be completely prevented. Tufts, recognizes these issues and has taken steps to mitigate.

Large and small construction projects are an important factor in Tufts growth and renewal. That should not mean that your health and safety will be at risk. If there is a concern about a project near your work space, speak up. Talk to your supervisor, contact Facilities Service, or contact Tufts Environmental Health and Safety (TEHS). For more information, please review the Construction Guidelines by visiting our website at <http://publicsafety.tufts.edu/ehs/facilities-and-construction-safety/>