

Avoiding Environmental Hazards,

By Dan Howard
for TRIB TOTAL MEDIA

WHY WE OFTEN CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT FOR OURSELVES

Reactions to health and environmental problems occur in time delay. If we are exposed to carbon monoxide, mold, pet allergens or any other trigger, we do not usually react right away. It may be 6 hours, or it may be a day or even weeks before we react. Our brains are wired to react immediately to problems. We touch the hot stove we are immediately burned. We cut our fingers, it hurts. Reacting to time delay environmental effects is difficult.

Everyone can react differently. The best example that I have is that some children can eat a single peanut and become deadly ill. Most children could live on peanut butter and jelly. This can be confusing to the person that is not getting ill from an exposure.

Individual health histories make each of us different in our reactions. There are medications and illnesses that make us more sensitive to certain exposures. As an example, there is one common mold that can affect organ transplant patients on immune-suppressant drugs, and be of little consequence to most other persons.

Time of exposure can differ. One family member that is in an affected part of the home longer than the rest of the family can have more serious reactions. We use the words "time loading" to describe this factor. As an example, many municipal



water systems actually have arsenic in their water. Our bodies can handle those small exposures. However, if I give you multiple exposures from several sources, you can become very ill. More exposure over more time can make one person ill, and not affect other family members.

We are affected by the sum total of our exposures. Homes, cars, schools, workplaces, grocery stores, places of worship are a part of most of our lives and one of those exposures can increase sensitivity to other exposures. As an example, medical facili-

ties are a common source of exposure to environmental hazards.

We just do not know what substances are hazards. Who would think that a new foam mattress or a new furnace installation could cause us health problems? Well, these and many other common materials can be a source of problems. The wasp nest blocking the gas dryer vent could make us sick. The new interior french drain is often a source of mold and can allow gases previously trapped under the home to vent into the air we breathe.



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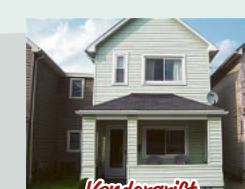
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Parks Township
One of a kind!! This amazing house has 4 bedrooms and 2.5 bath an attached garage and a detached garage. Beautiful country living but close to town. Public water is available- lines installed and tap is paid.

\$295,000

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SOME OF THE COMMON ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS AFFECTING HOMEOWNER HEALTH

- Carbon Monoxide from appliances
- Improper HVAC installations
- Mold behind walls
- Natural Gas Leaks
- Odor Cover-ups
- Ozone generating air cleaners
- Open plumbing vents
- Off gassing from soil below a home
- Off gassing from building materials and furnishings
- Legionella from water sources
- Illegal drug manufacturer residue
- Stored chemicals in failing containers
- Improper pesticide application
- Cover up products that can affect our health



Sometimes our solutions to environmental concerns make us sicker. Examples would be some of the fragrance "plug ins." They can have formaldehyde as a vehicle to help the odor go into the air and often contain a class of chemicals called esters that can be irritants. One anti odor product that was being inhaled by a client contained Ethyl Alcohol, which can damage the nervous system when inhaled. Another example is the ozone generating air cleaners. These can damage lung tissue.

The first step is to start a diary for the sick person. Remember that we react in time delay. We also often react to a combination of issues. If the furnace is a problem, we will only get sick after it has run for a long time. The clue in that instance is that the problem raises its ugly head in cold snaps. If the problem is really an automobile, problems will occur after longer car trips. If a major part of a problem is the

Keep track of places, meals, the weather and how the person that is experiencing the health issues feels.

Also provide background health issues to help your environmental professional to gather information that may help your medical provider to determine if the exposures are health risks for their patient. That diary provides an environmental investigator and medical provider a great place to start the search for avoiding health risks.

In general, if something smells, taste, feels bad, it is not healthy for us. When we feel ill, it is our warning to do something different to avoid becoming unhealthier. However to avoid environmental problems we need to identify them first. If you or someone in your home feels yucky, do something about it.

You will find links and information in the online copy of this article at: www.Envirospect.info/EnvironmentalHazardsections.



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