

WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

Date: January 10, 2024

To: Washington State Board of Health Members

From: Patty Hayes, Board Chair

Subject: Indoor Air Quality Panel

Background and Summary:

Under RCW 43.20.050(1), the State Board of Health (Board) is directed to serve as a public forum. The Board is committed to monitoring the health effects of indoor air quality (IAQ) and is hosting a panel to engage with technical experts and learn how IAQ is evolving in Washington and how it may impact those who reside in and visit Washington.

Indoor air quality impacts every person in Washington State. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of ventilation to reduce transmission and spread of respiratory illness. IAQ also has impacts across a broad spectrum of areas, including learning outcomes, respiratory health, and extreme climate conditions. Most people in the U.S. spend about 90 percent of their time indoors.¹ Thus, much of their exposure to airborne pollutants occurs indoors.¹ Concentration of some pollutants indoors is 2 to 5 times higher than outdoors.²

The Board will hear from experts and organizations about how our understanding of IAQ has changed in Washington, including what has been learned from the pandemic and where they see the future of IAQ heading. The Board will also learn about plans or efforts that organizations are engaged in to help improve IAQ. This is an opportunity for the Board to hear concerns and experiences from different experts, so the Board can align future initiatives with the needs of people living in Washington state. The concerns and experiences shared by panel members will also help the Board to prioritize topics to focus on within their authority related to IAQ.

The Panel consists of representatives of organizations from across local, state, and national levels, and includes:

- Eric Vander Mey – Delta E Consulting
- Brandon Kemperman – Public Health Seattle King County
- Nancy Bernard – Department of Health

¹ Fann N., Brennan T., Dolwick P., et al. Ch. 3: Air Quality Impacts. The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment. Washington, DC: U.S. Global Change Research Program; 2016:69-98.

² Rentz A., Rosen A. How States Can Better Regulate Indoor Air Quality. 2023. <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/2023/regulating-indoor-air-quality>. Accessed 10.19.2023

(Continued on the next page)

- Ben Omura – State Building Code Council
- Erin McTigue – Environmental Protection Agency Region 10

This informational briefing involves no Board action. The information shared will be used to inform the future work of the Board. Board staff will keep panel members informed about how their shared insights have impacted the work of the Board.

Staff

Andrew Kamali

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact the Washington State Board of Health, at 360-236-4110 or by email at wsboh@sboh.wa.gov TTY users can dial 711.

PO Box 47990 • Olympia, WA 98504-7990
360-236-4110 • wsboh@sboh.wa.gov • sboh.wa.gov