

## Portable Air Cleaners



According to the EPA, the best way to control or eliminate the sources of indoor air pollution is by ventilating the building with clean outdoor air.

By design, portable air cleaners are intended for residential use rather than institutional or commercial use. Accordingly, they have limited effectiveness in cleaning or purifying the air in larger office or classroom settings. In addition, EPA states that portable air cleaners do not have high enough air delivery rates to remove larger particles such as pollen, some molds and dust mite/cockroach allergens. Most of these particles are found where they settle on surfaces rather than in the air. These air-cleaning devices are also incapable of controlling gases and some odors.

It is important to remember that there is no scientific evidence that shows air-cleaning devices to be consistently and highly effective in reducing adverse health effects from indoor air pollutants, especially in sensitive populations.

Another issue to consider about portable air cleaning devices is the cost associated with purchasing, operating (e.g., electricity), and maintaining (e.g., cleaning or replacing filters and parts) the units on a regular basis.

Due to their limited effectiveness, EPA makes no broad endorsement of their use, nor specific endorsement of any brand or model. In keeping with best practices, the MCPS Indoor Air Quality Office does not purchase portable air cleaners or promote their use in the school system.

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