

IEQ Global Alliance

For better indoor environment quality



IEQ-GA – Presidential Column (October, 2020)

It has been an eventful first year for the Indoor Environmental Quality – Global Alliance (IEQ-GA). When we celebrated the incorporation of the IEQ-GA in October, 2019, in Ghent, Belgium, there was no discussion among the attendees about a coronavirus, no news about a SAR's outbreak, and very little concern about the possibility of an epidemic, much less a pandemic. Now, at times, the COVID-19 virus seems like the only thing that we all are talking about, and the only topic of conversation, both personally and professionally.

As President of IEQ-GA, I was hopeful that by now there would be good news concerning SARS CoV-19 virus, and the resulting COVID-19 diseases and deaths. Unfortunately, the age of COVID-19 has been relentless since my last Presidential Column in July, 2020. There seems to be a second wave of the virus in areas where reopening of schools, markets, and public venues such as restaurants and movie theatres have occurred. Also, areas that were not affected by the first wave are now involved in the second wave, and they are finding out about a lack of adequate hospital beds, treatments and PPE. The possibility of an effective vaccine in the near future seems unlikely, and the distribution of the vaccine to the billions in the world that are susceptible to contacting the disease will take many months and possibly years.

One possible 'bright spot' has been the acknowledgement by WHO and the US CDC that airborne transmission of the aerosols emitted by an infected patient or individual is one method that the virus is spreading. For both of these organizations, it has been difficult to reach a scientific consensus on this matter. As an early proponent of airborne transmission of the virus, IEQ-GA welcomes the new WHO and CDC statements. There have been also the issues of political intervention in the scientific process, as noted in a recent statement by the National Academy of Sciences. There have been other statements by scientific and technical publications about the need for 'courage' in the pursuit of scientific truth. IEQ-GA supports scientific integrity as essential to all IEQ research and practice.

The IEQ-GA Task Force on COVID-19 remains active, and its members are meeting regularly to discuss the ongoing pandemic and our response. The Task Force will stay current with the rapid changes that are occurring regarding the spread of the pandemic and the unprecedented response from the science, engineering, health and safety and research communities. A reminder that there is a webpage specifically dedicated to addressing concerns about COVID-19. This webpage includes a series of Questions &

Answers (Q&A) that are intended to help anyone who has concerns about COVID-19. This webpage can be found here: <https://ieq-ga.net/covid-19/information-center/>

IEQ-GA is looking forward to sponsoring a number of upcoming conferences regarding various aspects of indoor environmental quality. For the time being, it is likely that most of these conferences will be 'virtual'. Our Member Organizations will continue to post their conferences, webinars and symposia on the IEQ-GA webpage: <https://ieq-ga.net/events/> Please plan to attend these conferences by 'on-line' or in person, if possible.

The ASHRAE/AIVC 2020 Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) conference is currently planned for September, 2021. IEQ-GA is a sponsor of this conference entitled 'Transiting from IAQ to IEQ'. IEQ-GA looks forward to participating in the conference in September, 2021. For more information on this conference, please click on this webpage: <https://www.ashrae.org/conferences/topical-conferences/indoor-environmental-quality-performance-approaches>

IEQ-GA continues to lead the way on all matters related to indoor environmental quality, including IAQ, acoustics, lighting, vibrations and other environmental factors. We are often contacted by professional organizations in these fields regarding full and affiliate membership. For information on membership, please click on this webpage: <https://ieq-ga.net/contact/how-to-join-us/>

IEQ-GA expects to proceed with new and innovative means to communicate to workers and building occupants throughout the world that have issues with indoor environmental quality in their workplaces as well as their dwellings. Please continue your support in the coming year, and IEQ-GA will thrive even in these difficult times.

Please stay safe and healthy.

Donald Weekes, President of the IEQ-GA