

IEQ Global Alliance

For better indoor environment quality



IEQ-GA – Presidential Column (July, 2021)

In the northern hemisphere, summer has arrived, and many of us who have been cooped up for months are getting out and enjoying the sun, in our backyards, at the pool and at the beach. It seems like the end of the pandemic is coming, although it is still present in many parts of the world. Good advice is to stay safe by social distancing, wear a face covering indoors when in public, take care of adequate ventilation when indoors and keep close tabs on any adverse health symptoms. If we emerge slowly and carefully, it is quite possible that many of us can return to our 'normal' activities. That is not true in other parts of the world, as I will discuss later in this column.

As I mentioned in my previous Presidential Column, one of the results of the ISIAQ/IEQ-GA Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a new online program that includes a video show and audio podcast series coordinated by Healthy Indoors, a webcast company based in Syracuse, NY. The first program was streamed on June 30th, 2021. It was a live audience 60-minute show that was streamed on the new Healthy Indoors Global Online Community website. The first topic was focused on 'Indoor Environmental Quality in Schools' and it was discussed by Doctors Pawel Wargocki from the Technical University of Denmark, and Froukje Van Dijken from The Netherlands. They were both selected by ISIAQ and approved by IEQ-GA as guest speakers on this jointly owned and managed webcast. It was a lively and insightful discussion with the two guests and the co-hosts, Bob Krell from Healthy Indoors and myself. The recording of the show is freely available in the following link:

<https://ieq-ga.net/2021/07/video-recordings-available-indoor-environments-global-research-to-action-episode-1/>

The webcast programs are live streamed and they will provide an interactive audience experience, where guests will have the opportunity to answer live questions from the audience. The next webcast is scheduled for Monday, July 26th, at 11 am EDT (5 pm CEST). The topic of the next webcast is: "Water Quality, Waterborne Pathogens, and their Emerging Impact on Indoor Environments.", which will be discussed by Dr. Krause who was selected by IEQ-GA, and its member organization, the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA). Please join us at:

<https://global.healthyindoors.com/home#notifications>

It is hoped that the webcasts will be successful in the first six months, and that there will be additional programs in the future. For the future, the two organizations (IEQ-GA and ISIAQ) will look for other opportunities to collaborate under the terms of the MOU.

As we all look forward to the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been rays of hope and anticipation throughout the world. However, despite the successful vaccination program roll-out in North America, Europe and other locations, there is of

course a considerable amount of work still to be done to get the vaccine in more arms worldwide. Australia has recently had a surge of cases, leading to new wave of lockdowns. In the United States, there have also been surges in cases in certain states where the number of unvaccinated people is high. The delta variant of COVID-19 is increasing in many areas throughout the world, including Great Britain. Another variant (lambda) is also of concern in certain parts of the world, such as South America. These variants are highly transmissible, and it has been found that unvaccinated population is more vulnerable as these variants are spreading. In one study in the US, 99% of all deaths due to COVID-19 have been of unvaccinated persons.

There is also the issue with Long COVID (post-COVID condition) that has already affected millions of patients throughout the world. As stated by one infectious disease physician: *“Numerous studies over the past few months have shown that about 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 will have symptoms that last longer than the typical two weeks. These symptoms affect not only people who were very sick and hospitalized with COVID-19, but also those with milder cases.”*

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. I continue to ask that all of IEQ-GA’s member organizations and the professionals that belong to these organizations to support COVAX. COVAX is the WHO’s project to accelerate the development, production, and equitable access to COVID-19 tests, treatments, and vaccines. Its aim is to accelerate the development and manufacture of COVID-19 vaccines, and to guarantee fair and equitable access for every country in the world. More information can be found on their website: <https://www.who.int/initiatives/act-accelerator/covax>

In the second half of 2021, the Indoor Environmental Quality – Global Alliance (IEQ-GA), its member organizations, and the professional members of these organizations will continue to work together as a worldwide alliance of scientists, indoor environmental practitioners and researchers. In addition, as shown by our MOU with ISIAQ, we plan to work with other professional organizations on collaborative efforts, such as webinars, podcasts and publications, in order to provide to all of the world’s population effective and pertinent scientific information about indoor environmental quality (IEQ).

I would like to conclude with a reminder that IEQ-GA has set up a webpage specifically dedicated to addressing concerns about COVID-19. This webpage includes a series of Questions & Answers (Q&A) that are intended to provide information to anyone that wants to know more about COVID-19 transmission in buildings. This webpage can be found here: <https://ieq-ga.net/covid-19/faqs/>

Please stay safe and healthy.

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