

IEQ Global Alliance

For better indoor environment quality



IEQ-GA – Presidential Column (October, 2021)

It has been a long nineteen months since the advent of the Age of COVID in March, 2020 in North America, Europe, Asia, and elsewhere. Many of us are finally able to enjoy a 'new normal' life with vaccine passports, booster shots, the continuation of mask wearing, and social distancing. However, the pandemic is certainly not over in many parts of the world, and it is quite possible that there will be more waves or surges of COVID in areas that are starting to recover. We must remain vigilant and careful, especially as international travel begins again. As IEQ scientists and engineers, we must continue to offer science-based and evidence-based papers, recommendations and interviews. The amount of misinformation and non-scientific posts and tweets can be overwhelming, but this must be countered by the scientists and engineers who have carefully reviewed (and peer-reviewed) the data.

In the last few months, IEQ-GA's Board of Directors has been in touch with representatives of the World Health Organization (WHO). It has been an excellent dialogue, primarily about COVID-19, and related subjects. As a result of this dialogue, IEQ-GA has been invited to submit the names and credentials of qualified representatives to participate in the WHO's Environment and Engineering Control Expert Advisory Panel (ECAP) for COVID-19. In response to this invitation, IEQ-GA's Board of Directors have submitted three candidates to date, and a fourth candidate's credentials will be submitted shortly. We are hopeful that this will be the start of a favourable long-term relationship between WHO and IEQ-GA.

As I have discussed in previous President's Columns, the distribution of the vaccine to the billions in the world that are susceptible to contracting 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 coordination with ISIAQ and our MOU, we are now up to program #4 of the Indoor Environments webcasts. As noted previously, this 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 fourth program will be streamed on Friday, October 15th, 2021 at 11 am EDT. The topic will be regarding the ACGIH Book, Bioaerosols, 2nd Edition, and the activities of the ACGIH Bioaerosols Committee. This topic will be

discussed by Doctor Cheri Marcham, the Chair of the Bioaerosols Committee. She was selected by IEQ-GA's member, ACGIH as a guest speaker on this jointly owned and managed webcast. I am sure that it will be a lively and insightful discussion with Professor Marcham and the co-hosts, Bob Krell from Healthy Indoors and myself. The steaming of the webcast will be available at: <https://global.healthyindoors.com/c/indoor-environments/episode-4>

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

Throughout the pandemic, 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.

Donald Weekes, CIH, CSP, FAIHA
President, IEQ-GA