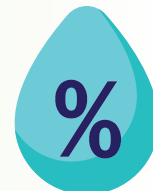


Relative Humidity (RH) in Schools

Maintain the recommended range for a healthy learning environment

What Is Relative Humidity?

- The percentage of moisture in the air at a given temperature. It indicates how full the air is of water vapor compared to its maximum capacity at that temperature.
- For example if the RH is 50%, the air is holding half of its capacity at that temperature.



Effects of Relative Humidity



- RH plays a key role in classroom comfort and health.
- RH over 60% promotes mold, mildew, dust mites, and bacterial growth. This can cause allergies, respiratory (breathing) problems, and bad odors.
- RH below 30% can cause dry eyes and skin, sore throat, irritated sinuses, and nosebleeds.

Recommended Indoor Range

SEHP Recommended RH Ranges - measured using an Air Quality Sensor:

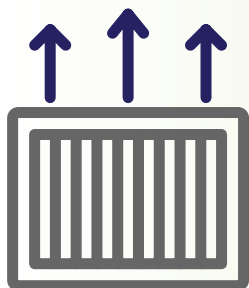
- **Excellent:** 45% - 55%
- **Good:** 30% - less than 45% or greater than 55% - 60%
- **Needs Improvement:** Less than 30% or greater than 60%



Maintaining Comfortable Indoor Relative Humidity

When RH is low, which is common in winter:

- Promote drinking water and allow students to wear layers.
- Keep vents and air returns clear of classroom materials and furniture.
- Use moisturizers, lip balm, or saline nasal sprays.
- If permitted by the school, consider humidifiers in very dry rooms.



When RH is high, which is common in summer and on humid days:

- Keep unit ventilators and air returns free of clutter to improve airflow.
- Report dampness, condensation, or musty odors to your Facilities Department.
- Consider using dehumidifiers in problem areas if allowed by the school.
- Reduce sources of moisture. For example, wet coats, boots, damp art or science materials, and wet floor mats.

New York State School Environmental Health Program
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