

FINLAND

Programmes designed to increase citizens' awareness about the impacts of indoor air pollution

The adverse health effects and costs of indoor air quality (IAQ) problems could be reduced significantly with proper use and maintenance of buildings and early detection and remediation of problems. Dissemination of information is the key to these savings. Therefore the Finnish ministries responsible for IAQ decided to launch an education and information campaign "Indoor Climate 2002". The activities were coordinated by the Finnish Society of Indoor Air Quality and Climate. The representatives of all the target groups were invited to join the work. Over 60 expert and consumer organisations responded positive. These organisations took up indoor climate issues in their activities during the campaign year. They produced informative material, arranged events, gave advice and organised education.

The objectives of the Campaign were:

- To improve the consumers' understanding of the health effects of indoor climate and their possibilities to improve it.
- To increase the knowledge and sense of responsibility of building owners and key management and maintenance personnel in solving indoor climate problems.
- To increase the level of know-how of construction professionals in indoor climate issues.
- To increase the knowledge of health care professionals in diagnosing symptoms and illnesses caused by poor indoor climate.
- To supply information and tools for guidance and control of indoor climate to municipal decision makers and authorities.

The following activities were carried out with the financial support of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of the Environment:

- Dissemination of information through mass media and professional journals
- Local indoor climate events
- Nationwide net of information stands
- Production of informative material
- Local networks of municipal experts
- Web service www.sisailma2002.net
- Production of educational material and organisation of professional education
- Participation in events and trade fairs
- Linking all interested organisations and their activities to the campaign
- Planning of future cooperation

The objective of dissemination of information through the mass media was to give the consumers and professionals in the building and real estate industry information about the importance of good IAQ and possibilities to improve it. The main messages of the campaign were:

- Indoor climate has an effect on everyone's life, quality of life and health
- Indoor climate has a great effect on work productivity
- Good maintenance of real estate pays back
- Information on the effects, factors, improvement and remedies of indoor climate is available

The main results of the campaign were:

- Dissemination of information through mass media and professional journals increased the number of media hits on indoor climate by 38 %
- 15 local indoor climate events with 1900 participants
- Nationwide net of 160 information stands
- Production and distribution of informative material: 10 leaflets, 30 000 copies each
- Local networks of municipal experts in 83 (out of 450) communities
- Over 7000 answered telephone and internet enquiries
- Web service www.sisailma2002.net
- Production of educational material and organisation of professional education
- Participation in events and trade fairs

Linking all interested organisations and their activities to the campaign