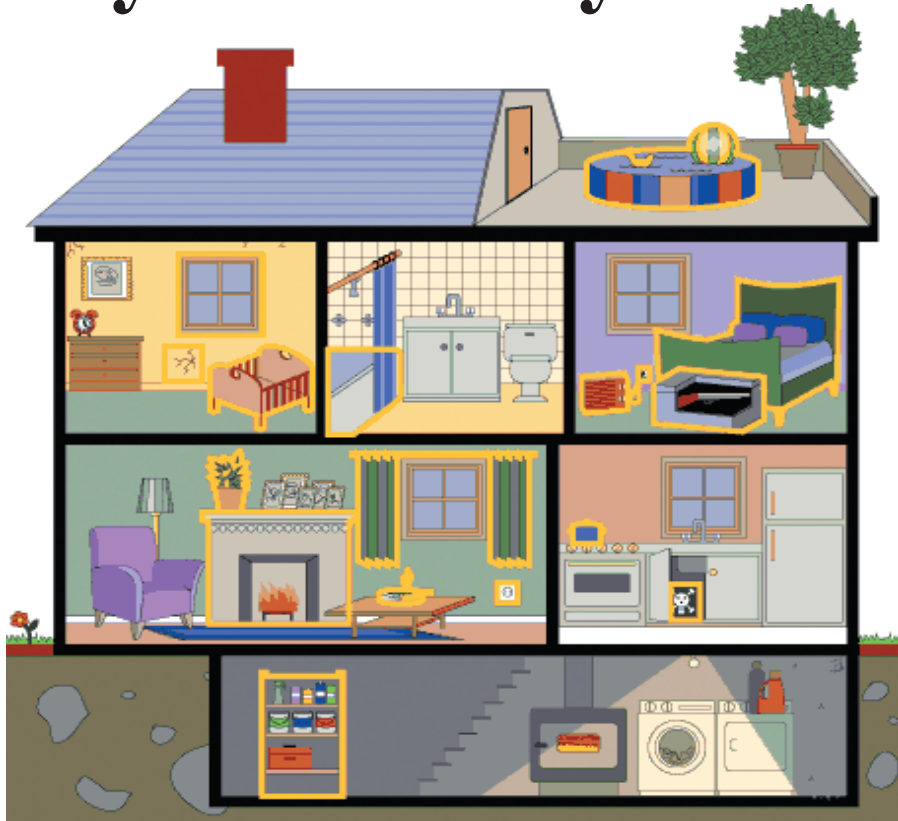




Ask Silva about Healthy, Wealthy & Eco-friendly Lifestyle

My home is my sanctuary, or is it?



Our home is the biggest financial investment that we make. We take a great deal of pride in its ownership, we spend thousands of dollars remodeling it, beautifying it to our style, decorating it with the latest designer furnishings and landscape it with lush plants. To keep our family safe and secure, we install the latest model security systems and install sensor lights on the perimeter to keep out strangers. The truth of the matter is, that the interior of our home could be killing us. This sounds like a harsh statement but consider this: the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) has concluded that many of us receive greater exposure to pollution indoors than outdoors. EPA studies have found concentrations of a dozen common organic pollutants to be two to five times higher inside homes than outside, regardless of whether they were located in rural areas or industrialised areas. Furthermore, people who spend more of their time indoors are thus exposed for longer periods to airborne contaminants and are considered most susceptible to poor indoor air quality - such as very young children, the elderly, and the chronically ill.

What kinds of substances are we talking about? Let's start with chemicals and synthetics. Building materials and interior furnishings emit a broad

array of gaseous volatile organic compounds (VOCs), especially when they are new. The materials include adhesives, carpeting, fabrics, vinyl floor tiles, some ceiling tiles, upholstery, vinyl wallpaper, particle boards, drapery, caulking compounds, paints and stains, and solvents. A few of these materials also act as "sponges", absorbing VOC's and other gases that can then be reintroduced into the air when the "sponge" is saturated. These kinds of building and furnishing materials also can be the source of respirable particulates, such as asbestos, fiberglass, and dusts.

Appliances, office equipment, and office supplies are another major source of VOC's and particulates.

Your own routine "cleaning and maintenance supplies" are not above suspicion, either. Many of the personal care and home cleaning products we use emit various chemicals (especially from the components that create fragrance), some of which many contribute to poor indoor air quality. Clothes returning from the dry cleaner may retain solvent residues, and studies have shown that people do breathe low levels of these fumes when they wear dry-cleaned clothing. Even worse, the pesticides we use to control roaches, termites, ants, fleas, wasps, and other insects are by defi-

nition toxic. Sometimes these poisons are tracked indoors on shoes and clothing. Do you have any of this stuff stored underneath the sink? One EPA study has suggested that up to 80% of most people's exposure to airborne pesticides occurs indoors.

The clinical effects of indoor air pollution can take many forms. The most common clinical signs include eye irritation, sneezing or coughing, asthma attacks, ear-nose-throat infections, allergies and migraine. More seriously, prolonged exposure to tobacco smoke, and other carcinogens in the air can cause cancer. Needless to say, the best way to protect your family's healthy and yours is to avoid or reduce your exposure to indoor air contaminants.

Before you run out of your house, consider this: You have worked hard towards building your healthy & wealthy lifestyle; you have planned and calculated every step for attaining your dreams, the last thing that you would want is to be careless about what you bring into your home. Consider the following tips:

- Avoid using chemically enhanced home cleaning products as there are many all natural home cleaning products. Try mixing white vinegar with water and lemon juice and instead of bleach, use baking soda with lemon;
- Avoid wall to wall carpeting, when it is a must, consider using recyclable carpets with no chemical adhesives, better yet, install Sisel carpeting;
- Vacuum your home furnishing and your mattress every week;
- Vacuum your heating & air-conditioning duct system and replace your filters every 6 months.
- Use paints with no or low VOC.

For more tips, please visit www.greenforlife.net and click on the Asksilva page and ask your question. Here is to healthy living.

About Silva

Silva is a general contractor and healthy and wealthy lifestyle developer. Author of the best selling book, "Jump Start Your Life - 7 Steps to Wake Up from the sleepwalking mode", a television personality and host of "Green for Life"®—the TV show & developer. Silva facilitates workshops and speaking engagements about building healthy, wealthy and eco-friendly lifestyles. She believes that success will come when you live in an environment that is your safe and healthy sanctuary for spirit, mind and body.

For questions about how to build your healthy, wealthy and eco-friendly lifestyle:

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