



**Minnesota Chapter
American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air
Conditioning Engineers, Inc. (ASHRAE)**

**Information on the Use of ASHRAE Standard 62.1-
2001, *Ventilation for Acceptable Indoor Air Quality*, by the State of Minnesota**

Because ASHRAE Standard 62.1-2001 is not a building code the Minnesota Chapter hereby offers information on the effective use of the Standard relevant to the activities (policies and procedures) of the Department of Administration and the Department of Commerce.

As stated in its Bylaws, ASHRAE is “organized and operated for the exclusive purpose of advancing the arts and sciences of heating, refrigeration, air conditioning and ventilation, the allied arts and sciences and related human factors for the benefit of the general public. To fulfill its role, the Society shall recognize the effect of its technology on the environment and natural resources to protect the welfare of posterity.”

In 1977, the Society published *Standards for Natural and Mechanical Ventilation*, ASHRAE Standard 62-1973, which was adopted by the American National Standards Institute as ANSI B 194.1-1977. A revised standard was released under the normal periodic review schedule as *Ventilation for Acceptable Indoor Air Quality*, ASHRAE Standard 62-1981 which recommended different air flow rates in smoking and non-smoking areas, and allowed two different methods to comply with the standard, the ventilation rate procedure and the indoor air quality (IAQ) procedure. ANSI/ASHRAE Standard 62-1989 retained the two-method approach to compliance but listed the same prescriptive air flow rates for smoking and non-smoking spaces. The standard recently approved by the Society and by ANSI, ASHRAE Standard 62.1-2001, incorporates eleven new addenda into Standard 62-1989.

Acceptable indoor air quality is a partially subjective concept defined in the standard as:

“Air in which there are no known contaminants at harmful concentrations as determined by cognizant authorities and with which a substantial majority (80% or more) of the people exposed do not express dissatisfaction.”

When the Standard’s ventilation rate procedure is used in the design of a building, the assumption is made based on engineering experience and judgment that contaminants will be diluted to levels which will satisfy the above definition of air quality. When the IAQ procedure is used, however, the assumption is made that there is a cognizant authority (adopted by local Authorities Having Jurisdiction) that has established maximum permissible concentration levels of contaminants.

ASHRAE standards are written for use by building owners, operators, designers, contractors, manufacturers, and Federal, State, and local governments. Many ASHRAE standards are used by model code organizations. The Society placed ASHRAE Standard 62-1989 under continuous maintenance (as defined by the American National Standards Institute) in 1997, and thereby, intends to amend the existing Standard over the course of several years to make technical modifications, as needed. Under continuous maintenance, one or more addenda are in the process of adoption at all times. Therefore, the Standard is constantly changing. In order to make this Standard useful for adoption to code making bodies, the Society plans to republish the complete Standard with all approved addenda in three year intervals to match the model code cycle.

It should be noted that neither this, nor any other ASHRAE standard, guarantees, certifies, or assures avoidance of all possible adverse health effects, in occupied spaces whose ventilation systems are tested, designed, installed, or operated in accordance with the Standard.

The Minnesota Chapter therefore recommends the following:

- 1) To adopt by reference ANSI/ASHRAE Standard 62.1-2001 and publish, in the State Register, notice of such acceptance.
- 2) Adopt by reference, each subsequent edition of the Standard at regular code review intervals.

Disclaimer: The Minnesota Chapter of ASHRAE may not speak for the Society, its officers, or staff on matters of policy, opinion, or statement of position.