

## Top 5 Risks Builders Face Due to Poor Indoor Air Quality



### Jim Shelton, Director of Sales and Marketing

Jim Shelton is driving the next generation of Panasonic solutions to meet

builders' ever-changing ventilation needs. Jim is Director of Sales and Marketing for the Eco Products Division, which markets Panasonic's line of Advanced Ventilation and IAQ Solutions. Based in Florida, Jim has worked for Panasonic since 2001 and has been in his current position since 2012. He is also on the board of the Energy and Environmental Building Alliance.

**Poor indoor air quality is a real problem.** As an industry, we've gotten away from why we install ventilation fans—to get moist, polluted air out of the home.

The first thing builders want to do is to comply with the local code. But you should start thinking about the risks associated with poor ventilation, not just about meeting code. You should also be concerned about the cost of increased callbacks, health issues and potential litigation.

Raters often don't test ENERGY STAR® rated exhaust fans; they say, "They're ENERGY STAR®, so they should work." But many don't move air at the rate they're supposed to.

A lot of builders aren't fully aware of the risks associated with poor ventilation. Panasonic's Director of Sales and Marketing Jim Shelton offers five risks you should consider:

**1. Reputation.** The number one concern of most builders is protecting their reputation. Recent studies conducted by Houzz, NAHB, Harvard's Joint Center for Housing Studies, and the Shelton Group have confirmed that indoor air quality (IAQ) is one of the top concerns of homebuyers.

And if their new home's IAQ does not meet their expectations, homebuyers are quick to report through social media.

**2. Code compliance problems.** Indoor air is typically two to five times more polluted than outdoor air, according to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). With people spending 90 percent of their time indoors, indoor air quality ranks in the top five environmental risks to human health. Many states have adopted ASHRAE 62.2, which requires a new home's bathroom exhaust fan's intermittent air flow rate be at  $\geq 50$  cubic feet per minute (CFM) or more, and that you measure the air flow and verify that it is moving at the required rate.

An 80 CFM fan may only move air at 18 or 20 CFMs when it's installed. In fact, a recent Lawrence Berkeley Lab study found that 48 percent of bathroom exhaust fans evaluated failed to meet ASHRAE 62.2's required air flow.

**3. Increased callbacks.** Once the buyers move in, you could receive complaints about moisture in the bathroom that causes foggy mirrors, foul odors and potentially dangerous mold and mildew growth if the fans are not moving the necessary amount of air.

**4. Warranty issues.** Many builders offer three-year warranties instead of one-year guarantees. If a new house isn't properly ventilated, it could experience mold and mildew or be damaged by moisture over time, triggering the warranty. The fix might be easy, such as replacing the bathroom fan, but it could involve replacing sheetrock and other costly repairs.

**5. Liability concerns.** Poor ventilation can lead to problems throughout the home. Expensive and lengthy litigation can be associated with mold and mildew remediation, especially if black mold is found throughout the structure. A house filled with mold and mildew could also have a devastating impact on the occupants' health. If you build a sick home and the homeowners

develop health problems, it could cost you millions of dollars. Now it's not just about repairing a bathroom; it could mean bulldozing down the house and costly litigation.

**Panasonic has a low-cost, high-performance solution that helps minimize these risks.**

Panasonic's new SelectCycler™ whole-house ventilation system was exclusively designed to work with our WhisperGreen Select™ exhaust fans that perform as promised to move air to meet these ASHRAE 62.2 and ENERGY STAR® Certified Homes 3.0 requirements.

Plus, SelectCycler™ offers the lowest cost-per-HERS point for either supply-only or balanced ventilation strategies, according to modeling conducted by third-party RESNET provider EnergyLogic, an energy-efficiency services firm, and EPX, an exclusive membership-only organization of the highest-performing HERS organizations. EnergyLogic is an EPX member.

No moisture, no callbacks, no health problems and low cost—that's what Panasonic's SelectCycler™ whole-house system offers builders.

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