

Sick Building Syndrome

What is Sick Building Syndrome (SBS)?

The term refers to a variety of symptoms which only affect occupants whilst they remain in a building. The term was coined by the World Health Organisation in 1984.

The WHO report in that year suggested that 30% of new or refurbished buildings worldwide could be related to this condition. Sick Building Syndrome is linked to poor air quality; lack of ventilation and air conditioning were amongst the culprits but by far the biggest contributor is the cocktail of VOCs found in indoor air.

The symptoms only affect the occupants whilst they remain in the building. The most common symptoms are:

- Headaches
- Skin irritations
- Blocked sinuses
- Runny nose
- Dry throats
- Hoarseness
- Eye irritation
- Dry skin particularly on face and hands
- Coughing
- Fatigue
- Asthma



Various research programmes have found that plants alleviate the condition. In one research study, complaints of headaches

were reduced by 45% whilst sickness absenteeism from these symptoms have been significantly reduced:

By 60% in an x-ray department in a hospital in Norway

By 50% in an office in Scotland

Sources:

www.wikipedia.org

www.healthygreenatwork.org

www.plantsforpeople.org