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Most of the time, you can solve an IAQ problem yourself. CMHC’s The Clean Air Guide is a good reference to start with. But occasionally, solving an IAQ problem may require a professional investigation. These are some answers to questions you may have about IAQ investigations.

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An IAQ investigation is an inspection of your home to determine if there are indoor air problems, identify the sources and outline solutions.

Is an IAQ investigation the same as a home inspection?
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How can I tell if I need an IAQ investigation?
An IAQ investigation may be needed for a number of reasons:

1. You are about to undertake a renovation. Make sure you take into consideration improving your air quality.
2. You suspect a problem but you don’t know what to do. There may be a history of flooding, roof leak or a previous fire.
3. You can see mold and it keeps coming back after cleaning.
4. There may be an odour in the house that cannot be explained or removed.
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A building-science based inspection has proven effective in identifying IAQ problems and solutions. Taking remedial action is far more important than identifying individual contaminants.

Shouldn’t you find out if toxic molds are present?
When mold is found to be growing in a house, the solution is to clean it up and correct the cause. The currently accepted guidelines emphasize fixing the problem rather than identifying the type of mold. However, specific situations may require mold testing. The investigator will let you know if tests are advised.

What if I suspect carbon monoxide?
Seek immediate help. If you suspect carbon monoxide, call a qualified heating contractor or your gas company to check your heating system. Carbon monoxide can be deadly. CMHC’s About Your House—Carbon Monoxide factsheet (62046). Visit www.cmhc.ca to view.

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Investigators set their own prices for their services. Costs for an investigation may range from $400—$500, but vary by location, complexity of the problem and travel time needed. The costs of any laboratory testing are usually additional.

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