

## Edinburgh Office workers hit by indoor air pollution

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Outdoor toxins can add to indoor air pollution

By Brian Donnelly

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Office workers in Edinburgh are suffering health problems from indoor air pollution, a new survey has found.

YouGov said that the survey commissioned by the Building Engineering Services Association (BESA), the trade organisation for building engineering services contractors, reports that 79 per cent of office workers surveyed in Edinburgh with poor air quality in their place of work feel that it is having a negative effect on their day-to-day working practices.

Almost a third (31 per cent) of Edinburgh workers surveyed are concerned that poor indoor air quality could have a long-term negative effect on their health.

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Over three quarters (77 per cent) of Edinburgh recipients report suffering from lapse in concentration on a monthly or more frequent basis and 73 per cent of recipients report suffering from fatigue on a monthly or more frequent basis.

Close to half of Edinburgh office workers report suffering from irritated or dry eyes frequently.

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David Frise, BESA's head of sustainability said: "In reality, we need proper, well maintained air conditioning and ventilation systems in place. We need to make our buildings a safe haven for occupants, to protect them from the worst impacts of outdoor pollution."

Professor Stephen Holgate, Royal College of Physicians' special adviser on air quality, said: "Poor ventilation is one part of this problem and with the drive to reduce energy costs by creating spaces with ever tighter ventilation, such an issue will only be made worse.

"We now know that air pollution has a substantial impact on many chronic long-term conditions, increasing strokes and heart attacks in susceptible individuals. That is why this is not just a job for government, local authorities or business - as individuals we can all do our part to reduce pollutant exposure."

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