

DPS Environmental Myth Buster—#6

“Opening windows at work is better for our health”

Maintaining the indoor air quality of a building is necessary to ensure the comfort and health of its occupants. Indoor air quality is also known to have an effect on productivity within the workplace.

In a recent study conducted at Parliament House it was found that the air quality inside Parliament House was actually better than the air quality outside. This is due to the effective maintenance program that is carried out, which ensures that the air-conditioning ducts and dampers are kept in excellent condition and the filters are replaced regularly.

Another important reason for keeping the windows and doors closed is to ensure that the air-conditioning system operates efficiently. The system carefully regulates how much outside air is needed depending on the temperature. Large fresh air intakes supply this air and air handling units filter and treat the air. For health requirements the air-conditioning system is programmed to always ensure that a proportion of outside air is brought into the building, regardless of outside air temperature.

The temperature of outside air also impacts on how much heating and cooling is needed, which may consume significant amounts of energy. If outside air is let into the building through an open door or window it can upset the temperature balance and create extra work for the air-conditioning system.

This is why the windows can't be opened. If you see doors open then please shut them to keep our indoor environment at its best condition for health and efficiency.

See the article on air quality in this edition of the Dispatch for more information, or contact David Millar on extn 5032.

Strategic Planning and Policy