

# Healthy Home Tip of the Month September 2011

(Airs on KUGN-radio once a month during the first week.)



*Indoor air pollution prevention can be as simple as kicking off your shoes!*

Shoes are a primary source of unwanted and unhealthy pollutants coming into your home from outside. Here are 8 reasons why eliminating dirt from shoes is important:

- Shoes carry lead, arsenic, pesticides and other harmful compounds indoors. Once inside, these chemicals get absorbed in household dust.
- Shoes pick up traces of diesel petroleum particles and industrial pollution.
- Shoes can pick up pesticides, fertilizers and other chemicals.
- Recent studies have found a high level of copper and asbestos, coming from break linings at intersections. The heavy metals settle there.
- Dust is a common asthma/allergy trigger. Keep it out. Put a large floor mat at every door. Wiping shoes on a high quality, rough doormat reduces indoor dust by 86%.
- Babies and small children spend a lot of time playing on the floor and putting fingers, toys and other odds and ends into their mouth. If you have a crawling baby, do you want him or her to be exposed to the dirt from people's shoes? How about dogs?
- And if you feel uncomfortable, you and those who live with you can practice it for a bit, and when you are ready, you would be able to ask others to remove shoes before entering your home.
- **Health effects** from indoor air pollutants may be experienced soon after exposure or, years later.
  - irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat
  - headaches,
  - dizziness and fatigue,
  - asthma,
  - hypersensitivity pneumonitis,
  - respiratory diseases, heart disease



## *Did you know...?*

*Women here are twice as likely to be affected by asthma as men; 11.3 percent of female adults have the disease, compared with 6.2 percent of male adults.*

For more detailed information about common household products, their toxicity, alternatives to their use, and disposal suggestions go to our web site: [www.OregonToxics.org](http://www.OregonToxics.org) and click on the "Consumer Safety" button.

## ***Who is OTA and why focus on Asthma?***

- \* Oregon Toxics Alliance's mission is to work for all Oregonians to help communities find solutions that protect human and environmental health.
- \* We found there to be an alarming rate of asthma in Eugene. The Lane County average asthma rate is 10.5 %, compared to the US national average of childhood asthma of 7.5 percent.
- \* The Oregon Asthma Program estimates that 227,000 adults in Oregon have the disease.

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