

SPONSOR  **Volunteers of America**
There are no limits to caring.®

DONATE your CAR **800-948-1414**
www.carshelpingpeople.org

WTOP **Washington's News, Traffic & Weather**
RADIO NETWORK 104.3 fm • 107.7 fm • 1500 am • 820 am

LISTEN LIVE News Traffic Weather FederalNewsRadio.com

WTOP NEWS  [Print this article](#)  [Email this article](#)  [AIM this article](#)  [XML](#)  [RSS](#)

SEARCH

TOP NEWS

- [Home](#)
- [Local](#)
- [National](#)
- [World](#)
- [Sprawl & Crawl](#)
- [Traffic](#)
- [Weather](#)
- [Sports](#)
- [Business](#)
- [Technology](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Entertainment](#)
- [Elections](#)
- [Science](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Government](#)
- [Mideast News](#)
- [WTOP Investigates](#)
- [Watercooler](#)
- [Recalls](#)
- [Call For Action](#)
- [Closings & Delays](#)
- [News Links](#)
- [Photo Galleries](#)
- [Program Schedule](#)

SPECIAL REPORTS

- [Troubled Waters](#)
- [Inside Guantanamo](#)
- [WTOP in Iraq](#)
- [Real Estate Roulette](#)
- [Pope Benedict XVI](#)
- [Tsunami Disaster](#)
- [America on Alert](#)
- [Supreme Court](#)
- [Lead in Water](#)
- [Sniper Shootings](#)

WTOP FEATURES

[Home Page](#) » [News](#) » [Local](#) » [Local Stories](#)

Dancing on Carpet May be Harmful to Your Health

Updated: Thursday, Mar. 31, 2005 - 6:31 AM

 **WTOP's Ed Thompson talks with air quality researcher Andrea Ferro.**

Dirty dancing takes on new meaning if you have carpet.

Scientists, who have been collecting information on indoor air pollution to assess possible health risks, say one of the the biggest dust-makers in your home is solo dancing on a rug. Another is just walking around and sitting on furniture.

"There are components of house dust that we've already known for a long time that cause health problems," Andrea Ferro, professor of civil and environmental engineering at Clarkson University and an air quality researcher, tells WTOP.

Different toxic chemicals, such as lead, pesticides, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) are routinely found in household dust, Ferro says.

Particles can accumulate in the respiratory system and aggravate health problems, such as allergies and asthma.

Ferro and her co-workers use particle detectors in a house in Redwood City, Calif., to measure how much the particles accumulated. After doing a variety of household activities - everything from just sitting on furniture to dancing -- and then applied a mathematical model to estimate the strength of each source.

Ferro's research is in the March 15 edition of Environmental Science & Technology, a peer-reviewed journal of the American Chemical Society.

"Leaving your shoes at the door will stop a lot of harmful chemicals from getting tracked into your home and you should think twice before covering your house in wall-to-wall carpeting," Ferro says in a news release.

Advertisement

Keeping Kids Connected

 powered by **NOVEC**

Presented by INOVA Fairfax Hospital for Children

This Month's Topic: Sunscreen & Pool Safety

[Click Here to read more](#)





Clarkson University Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering Andrea Ferro with a MOUDI cascade impactor, an instrument that separates and collects airborne particles in nine size ranges from 0.18 mm (micrometer) to 18 mm, which she uses in her research on indoor air pollution. Here, she checks the flow rate through the MOUDI using a Bios electronic flowmeter. Particle size is important in Ferro's research because the size of a particle affects where in the respiratory tract it will deposit. (Photo courtesy of Clarkson University)

MOST VIEWED STORIES

**Mike Causey's
Federal Report**
GEICO

"Always increase ventilation when performing activities like vacuuming, dusting, frying or painting that create or resuspend pollutants. Opening doors and windows or running a fan or air conditioner will increase ventilation. As a general rule, the more ventilation, the less exposure."

- [Ga. Boy Killed While Mom Away Having Baby](#)
- [Sons of Killed Scout Leaders Return Home](#)
- [Dead Zone Consumes One-Third of Chesapeake Bay](#)
- [Pepco Expects Record Day for Electric Use](#)
- [Did Microsoft Wipe Apple Off the Map?](#)

Ask the CIO
Cisco Systems

Ask the Doctor
Suburban Hospital

**Sensible
Alternatives**
GEICO

Indoor air quality studies have been going on for the last 10 years.

Man About Town
Bob Madigan

"In most cases, we find outdoor air is a good deal cleaner than indoor air."

**National Security
Report**
American Systems Corporation

Ferro is studying how different particles behave in an indoor environment.

**Govt. Technology
Report**
GMRI

"Certain particles deposit on surfaces quickly, others remain in the air for longer periods of time," Ferro says in the release. "Particles also have different residence times, that is, some remain present in the indoor air environment longer before settling and being removed by cleaning or floating out an open window. The fate of an indoor air particle depends on its size and composition and the human activity indoors."

Pentagon Report
ARINC

She's looking at emission rates from different activities, such as walking and vacuuming, to determine which ones resuspend the largest concentration of particles.

**The Politics
Program**
Mark Plotkin

While she says your household is not a toxic dump site, she says you'll want to do some research before spraying cleaning products in your house or office.

**Charity of the
Month**
Mattress Discounters

"Many pollutants don't just evaporate. If you spray chemicals to rid your house of cockroaches, the pesticide remains in the air for a certain length of time. The chemicals may then adhere to surfaces and carpets, but they may be released into the air again when you vacuum your house or simply walk across the carpet. In addition to the risk of breathing the chemicals, touching the contaminated surfaces can lead to exposure through the skin," Ferro says.

**Keeping Kids
Connected**
NOVEC

She says better labeling is needed on household products.

**Runs for the Right
Cause**
SAIC

Ferro's advice when using sprays in your home: "When spraying aerosol products keep the nozzle close to the area of application to avoid spreading chemicals to other areas. Also avoid human and pet traffic in the area of application until you get a chance to wash down the area with soap and water."

**Trends in
Technology**
CDW-G

(Copyright 2004 by WTOP. All Rights Reserved.)

Ask the CAO
JWOD

**1050 AM Weekend
Programming**

Falls Church Homes

Updated Listings Every Two Hours Your Falls Church Va Specialists

Homes For Sale

Free Search of Bank & Gov't Owned Homes. Save 25-50% On Your New Home

Ads by Google

[About These Ads](#)



[< Back](#)