

# NEWS

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## **HILTON O'HARE AIRPORT PILOTS PROJECT OF ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY ROOM DESIGN FOR GUESTS WITH ALLERGY RELATED SENSITIVITIES**

(Chicago, IL) - With over 20 million Americans reported as sufferers of Asthma, (the prevalence of the disease up 75% from 1980 to 1994), and as many 70 million with allergies, it is evident these and other respiratory illnesses are on the rise, according to the National Center for Health Statistics, Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

"It is for these reasons, we're exploring offering hotel rooms that provide air quality for those Hilton guests afflicted with sensitivities and reactions to dusts, molds or chemicals," according to J. Peter Lynn, General Manager of the Hilton O'Hare Airport. Specifically, Lynn is referring to a pilot project at the Hilton hotel located on the grounds of the O'Hare International Airport. The project, executed through a Chicagoland firm that specializes in indoor air quality, seeks to control the three components that form poor indoor air quality. These are bio-aerosols, which are made up of spores; particulates, which are largely dust particles, and Volatile Organic Compounds (V.O.C.s) that are gassed off from almost everything in a room, especially furniture, carpet and cleaning supplies. "By eliminating and therefore controlling what goes into a room, we can minimize the exposure to our guests of these elements, and provide better indoor air quality," Lynn said.

The project began with Lynn identifying several rooms in the Hilton O'Hare Airport, and instructed the firm to completely gut them. "Literally everything was removed from these rooms -- floor coverings, wall coverings, drapes, furniture, bedding -- everything," Lynn emphasizes.

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With the spaces completely stripped, the firm (which has a patent pending on the methodology) then began rebuilding the rooms with special wood flooring, wall coverings, fabrics, furniture, paints, adhesives and cleaning products, etc. (A total breakdown of what is different in the rooms is attached.) The rooms also include “a state-of-the-art air purification technology that provides a significant reduction in particulates, microbial, VOC’s and other allergens.”

Prior to developing the new project the firm consulted with such organizations as the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology; the American College of Asthma, Allergy and Immunology and Allergy Foundation. These organizations not only expressed real excitement for what is called Hilton's "Enviro-Room Designs"™ but have displayed a willingness to publicize Hilton's initiative to its various constituencies. Highly respected Chief of Allergy and Immunology of Advocate Health Centers, Dr. Michael B. Foggs is among those in the medical community who support the Enviro-Room Design concept Hilton is piloting. “Hilton Hotels should be commended for having the insight and foresight to provide their customers with the option of staying in hotel rooms with enhanced air quality.” I am proud to be a part of this progressive innovation. Enhanced air quality is an environmental refinement whose time has come, Foggs said.

A unique monitoring system offers a highly innovative, state-of-art approach to environmental monitoring. This system, unlike anything else available, provides the hotel with critical information that will help ensure healthy indoor air qualities. The system records the five crucial indoor air quality parameters- temperature, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), relative humidity, odor and gases (TVOCs), and carbon monoxide (CO). The hotel can then access this real-time IAZ information in the form of charts and graphs with a password-protected Internet connection through a website. Real time data collection allows instantaneous comparisons to alert limits. If IAQ reading exceed predetermined specifications, our engineers are notified that alert conditions occurred, immediately, 24 hours a day via e-mail or pager.

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Following the installation of the allergy and asthma friendly rooms at the Hilton O'Hare Airport, Lynn is going to take a "wait and see" posture as to the rooms' future. "It clearly is a matter of assessing our guests' demands for these special type of accommodations. Since there is an added cost in creating these rooms, we need to make certain they are willing to pay the nominal extra charge for providing them, and the air quality that's made possible in them," Lynn said.

Hilton Hotels Corporation is recognized internationally as a preeminent hospitality company. The company develops, owns, manages or franchises approximately 2,300 hotels, resorts and vacation ownership properties. Its portfolio includes many of the world's best known and most highly regarded hotel brands, including Hilton®, Conrad™, Doubletree®, Embassy Suites Hotels®, Hampton Inn®, Hampton Inn & Suites®, Hilton Garden Inn®, Hilton Grand Vacations Company® and Homewood Suites® by Hilton.

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## **Environmental Technology Solutions, Inc. rebuilds each room from the ground up:**

- Floor:
  - Cork underlay
  - Hardwood floor
  - Water Based Stain
  - Natural Carpet Pieces

All flooring products have been researched and only products that meet or exceed EPA specs can be used. By eliminating 95% of carpet we can control V.O.C.'s and particulates. By using low to no V.O.C.'s stains we can control off-gassing.
- Wall Covering:

Only breathable non vinyl wall paper can be used. Paints with no V.O.C.s, and only natural based adhesives will be used. This allows us to control V.O.C.'s and helps combat mold issues, and control Bio-aerosols.
- Drapes:

Side panel draperies and valences designed with approved materials. Custom shutters made by Hunter Douglas with only approved materials. Help control V.O.C.'s and particulates.
- Furniture:

No pressboards, no particle board. All furniture to be stained with no V.O.C. stain. All glues to be natural adhesives which help contain V.O.C. s. All furniture will have sealed edges by factory.
- Bathrooms

Caulking and tile adhesive will be V.O.C. free. Showerhead is chlorine/chemical free.
- Cleaning Products

All cleaning supplies including but not limited to, tub and tile cleaner, glass cleaner, furniture polish, and multi-purpose cleaner, will be furnished by Free and Clear products. All products are fragrance and chemical free. This helps control V.O.C.'s.
- Amenities

All products will be free and clear products. Shampoo, conditioners, lotions, facial soaps and body cleansers are all free of chemicals and fragrances.
- Maintenance

A complete maintenance schedule will be included for Staff. Details will include products to be used, how bedding should be laundered, and how rooms will be maintained.
- Bedding

All bedding will be natural cotton products and be washed with special detergents in hot water only.