

# Eliminate your dangerous decor

Decorating the interior of a home with furnishings can be a challenge if any residents are sensitive to chemicals that are used in their manufacture or preservation. Many furnishings contain formaldehyde and other volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and can off-gas chemical emissions.

Here are some helpful tips to consider when choosing or maintaining furnishings for your home:

- When selecting cabinets and furniture, try to choose products made of solid hardwood, not particleboard. Cabinets made from particleboard have a wood veneer finish glued to them. The particles and the glue may contain formaldehyde that, when emitted, may act as an irritant. If purchasing furniture that contains particleboard, consider sealing it with a no or low VOC sealant.

- Smooth surface flooring material, such as tile, vinyl and wood, is easy to clean and harbors fewer particles. They may be the best choice if someone in your household has allergies or asthma.

- If you use carpeting, a product with a short nap is easier to clean. Area rugs and carpets that can be removed for frequent cleaning may be the best choice.

- When remodeling, use gypsum board, plaster or real wood for walls. Plastic or wood fiber paneling may emit formaldehyde and other VOCs.

- Carpet is also a hiding place for many small particles such as dust, pet dander, and mold, and vacuuming can redistribute many of these particles back into the air. Use a vacuum with a high efficiency filtration system to keep those problem particles in the vacuum cleaner

where you want them.

However, if too little outdoor air enters your home it won't matter how much you try to control these pollutants, they will inevitably accumulate to levels that can pose health and comfort problems. The impact on your health can range from allergies, colds, sinusitis, insomnia, headaches, asthma, persistent coughing to even an increased risk of chronic respiratory illness.

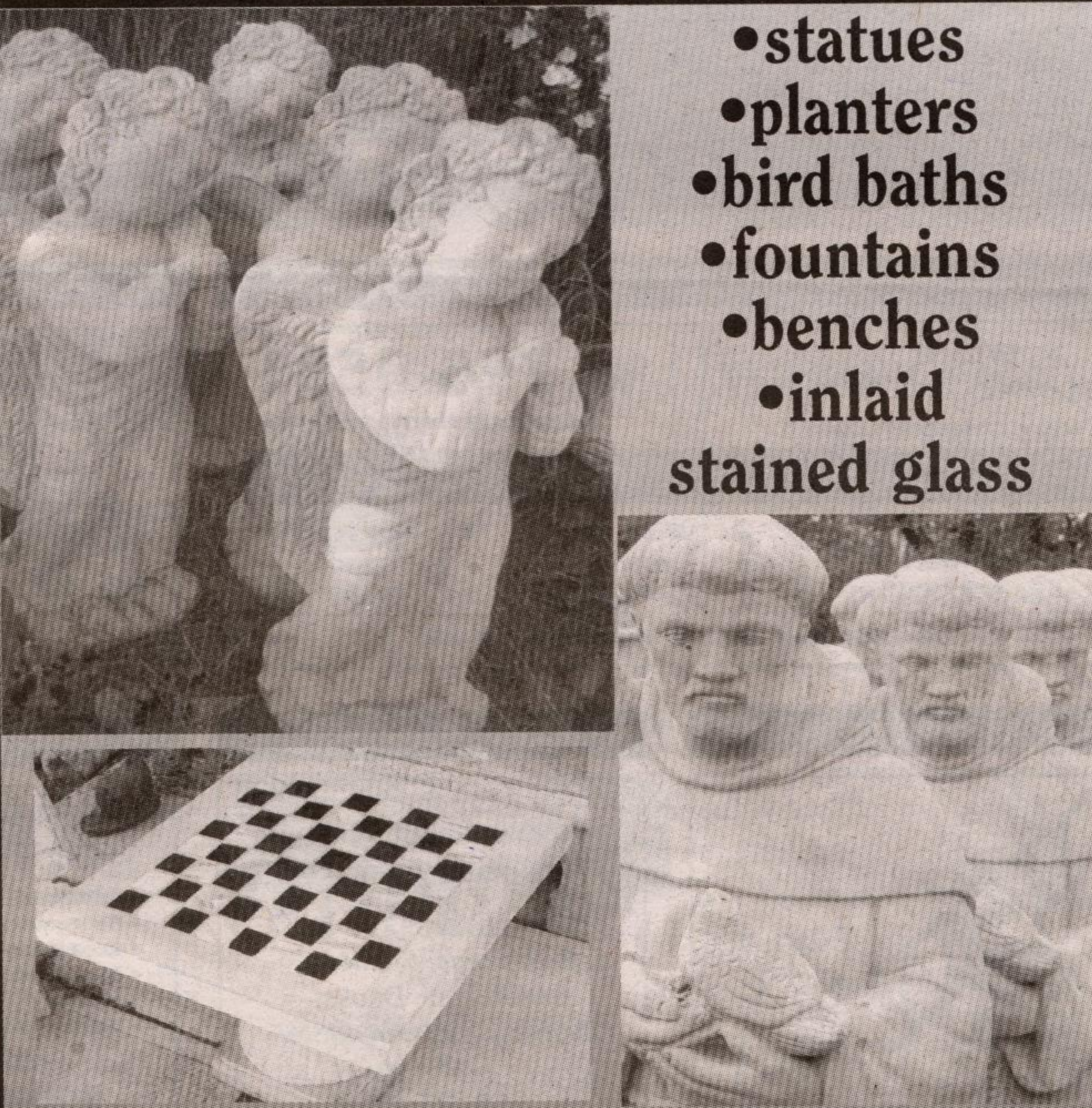
According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the best ways to eliminate the effects of these harmful indoor pollutants, beside source control, are filtration and ventilation.

A Canadian-based company, Venmar Ventilation is the first manufacturer of ventilation systems to offer a unit that integrates heat recovery ventilation technology with HEPA filtration at an affordable price. Venmar HEPA 3000 air exchanger provides fresh outdoor air and at the same time ensures the best indoor air quality by trapping airborne allergens such as pollen, dust, pet dander mold and bacteria through its HEPA filter.

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—News Canada

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