

# Blog 4: Are homes with pets breathing healthy air?

It is an estimate that over 70% of American households have a pet. We love our pets and those of our family and friends. Having a pet is a rewarding experience, and the health benefits they have on us are well known. Given that having pets is so popular, we must understand their effects on indoor air quality.

Particles of skin called dander are released when pets shed. The dander's size is significant, as it is smaller than dust mites. For this reason, it becomes both hard to remove and stays airborne for long periods. Consequently, most homes with pets have an invisible enemy lingering in their air supply, ready to attack the next houseguest with pet allergies. In addition to its small size, pet dander has jagged edges. It has a velcro effect when in contact with furniture, which often latches onto and remains in place for a long time.

It can be a challenge to maintain your home's air quality, especially when a pet is involved. Most homeowners can easily manage this situation with proper equipment and upkeep.

## **Removing Pet Dander**

The quickest way to increase your home's air quality is by removing dander, making the environment more suitable for those with allergies. Reducing the amount of dander and loose fur your pet has is the easiest way to improve air quality by regularly brushing and bathing your pets. Through these processes, you are effectively removing a significant number of potential allergens from the pet before it releases into your home.

Another way to combat pet dander is to purchase quality HVAC filters. Consider purchasing a filter with an MERV rating between 8 and 11, designed to address pet particles. Regular replacement of these filters is essential because they tend to clog up and strain your system. While a home without pets may need a filter replacement every 30-90 days, those with pets may need to consider a monthly replacement cycle.

A good filter can only go so far. Regularly vacuuming your home (both the floor and furniture) as well as the dusting of flat surfaces with a microfiber cloth is necessary and in tandem with good filtration.

Having a pet should lead to enjoyment and companionship. If you are considering getting a pet or already have one, ask yourself if you are doing everything you can to create a home environment that is enjoyable for all. Do not hesitate to contact RC Mechanical for a home evaluation by scheduling an appointment by calling (812) 683-0675. While we are good with HVAC systems, we are great with pets as well.