Help! There Is a Stinky Smell (Indoor Air Quality issue)

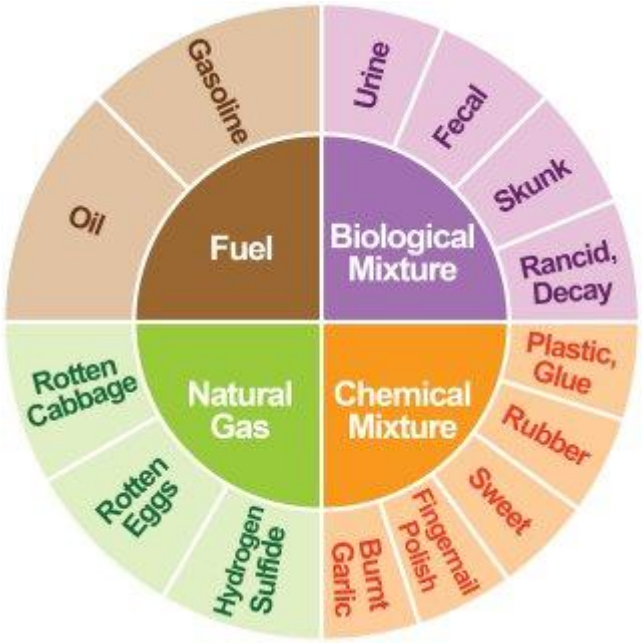
What do you do if you notice an unpleasant or stinky or unsafe smell in your office or building?

Facility Services Dispatch 907-474-7000 EHSRM Industrial Hygiene 907-474-6771
Facilities Services Safety 907-474-5949 After hours UAF Dispatch 907-474-7721

1. Do you believe this is immediately unsafe? Call FS Dispatch or call 911
    - Examples: You and others are experiencing sudden physical reactions, or
    - you're in lab, you smell "gas," and the gas spigot is open or cracked
2. This is an odor that should be reported, but is not immediately dangerous to life and health
    - Contact your department admin or building coordinator. Has anyone else reported this issue?
    - Contact others in your area. Is this widespread or localized? Is it fading, or getting stronger? How do others describe the odor?
    - Call it in to report it (contacts listed above). Be prepared to answer the four questions below (what are you smelling? How strong? How long? Location?) and leave your contact info for someone to ask follow-up questions.
    - Examples: Vehicle exhaust indoors, electrical smell near elevator, strong solvent odor
3. There is a vague smell, but you're not sure if you should report it
    - Talk to others in your area to see if anyone else has noticed it, or can identify it
    - Follow your nose. Can you narrow down the source?
    - Keep some notes—does this occur frequently? Every Monday morning? Between semesters?
    - Report them to your department admin or building coordinator.

Questions to ask yourself (Questions your Indoor Air Quality responders will ask you)

- **What are you smelling?** Instead of saying "smells bad," try to describe it using specific terms like "rotten eggs," "burned plastic," "diesel exhaust" or "musty".
- **How strong is the smell?** Weak, moderate, strong, or very strong. Increasing or decreasing?
- **How long has the smell been happening?** Just started, less than an hour, a few hours, about a day, several days, or not sure.
- **Any additional information to add?** List any additional information related to the odor. This includes location (just one office, an entire floor, on east side of building…), any FS work done in/around your building (ventilation changes, painting, deep-cleaning), unusual conditions (strong winds, a group of tour buses, floors were cleaned last night).



Louisville Odor Wheel
https://www.epa.gov/air-research/odor-explore-participatory-science-project-using-mobile-app-and-new-measurement