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Three Oregon organizations receive national recognition for Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Program

TIGARD, ORE. – The American Lung Association of Oregon, Oregon Department of Education and Oregon Education Association today received three of five Environmental Protection Agency Special Achievement Awards for their *Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools* work throughout Oregon. The committee launched in Oregon in November 2005 and has made tremendous strides during its first year.

The three organizations teamed up with several other local and regional partners to form the Oregon Partnership for Indoor Air Quality in Schools, which collaboratively spearheads the EPA *Tools for Schools* program. The group's mission is to improve indoor air quality in all Oregon schools by helping school districts develop and adopt indoor air quality management programs.

“It has been a privilege to help implement the *Tools for Schools* program,” said Beverly Stewart, Asthma Program Coordinator for the American Lung Association of Oregon. “Asthma is the leading cause of school absenteeism in children with chronic illness – up to 15 million school days a year nationally. This program is important because it provides proactive ways to improve indoor air quality and helps reduce kids' exposure to asthma triggers at school.”

“Indoor air quality affects health, which in turn affects learning,” said Stewart. “Working with schools to underscore the importance of healthy indoor air quality makes a difference for kids with asthma in Oregon.”

The Oregon Partnership for Indoor Air Quality in Schools work consists of sharing best practices with school districts and providing them with expert technical support, education and training. In its first year, it has already reached over 75 school district personnel.