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# New device from CMU group monitors air quality in homes

*Speck measures particulates with air intake*

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## **PITTSBURGH -**

A Pittsburgh company has invented a small device that can monitor air pollution in homes.

Speck was created by the [CREATE Lab](#), which is a part of Carnegie Mellon University.

The device constantly measures particulates with the air intake, said the lab's director, CMU professor Illah Nourbakhsh.

"Sometimes the air smells funny. You get up in the morning in Squirrel Hill or in Braddock or in Hazelwood, and sometimes it just doesn't smell right," Nourbakhsh said.

"Some days it will be bad, and some days it will be good, and you have no idea," said Beatrice Dias, of CREATE Lab. "And with a device like this, it really gives you some information and makes things more clear."

Speck costs \$200 and can be ordered at [specksensor.com](http://specksensor.com), or you can check it out from the Carnegie Library system.

People can also go to [specksensor.com](http://specksensor.com) and type in their ZIP code to see the latest air quality readings from the nearest federal air monitor.

With Pittsburgh's air getting a failing grade again by the American Lung Association, Nourbakhsh said residents should know the quality of air in their home.

"Every statistic I've been able to study and read shows air pollution in Pittsburgh impacts our health," Nourbakhsh said.

Experts blame bad air for shortening life expectancy by causing asthma attacks, heart problems and even cancer.

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