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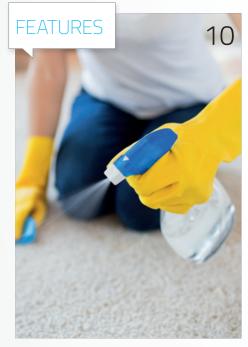


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# **CI/IT** THIS MONTH...



### **OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE CLEANING**

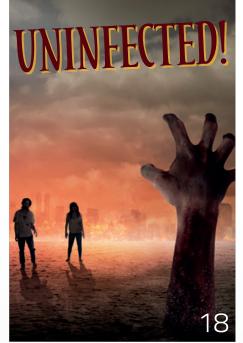
Over recent years more and more people have become aware of the trials and pitfalls surrounding Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). Films like The Aviator and celebrities "coming out" about the illness have seen it properly enter the public consciousness. It is amazing just how much of OCD revolves around cleaning and hygiene, CHT looked to find out more.

### SCHOOLING CLEANERS

Cleaning in schools and colleges is very different from cleaning a normal office, there are a whole host of specific rules, regulations and advice to take into account. CHT casts its eye over some of the most important.

### **EXPECT THE UNINFECTED!**

When it comes to infections we are Constantly told that prevention is better than cure. CHT investigates what steps can be taken to make sure you don't have an outbreak in your workplace.



### THE HYGIENE MYTH

It is generally assumed that being as clean as physically possible is a good thing. But then again you often hear stories of microorganisms developing resistance to antibiotics, of children who are never exposed to germs not developing a great immune system. In this article CHT asks if there really is such a things as being too clean.

If you have any news related to the cleaning industry, please contact our assistant editor Sarah O'Beirne...

### ≤ sarah.obeirne@kpmmedia.co.uk

### **EDITORIAL**

Editor - Charlie Kortens charlie.kortens@kpmmedia.co.uk Mob: 07867 418830 Tel: 01322 476817

Assistant Editor – Sarah O'Beirne sarah.obeirne@kpmmedia.co.uk Tel: 01322 476815

### ACCOUNTS

Trish Boakes accounts@kpmmedia.co.uk Tel: 01322 476814

Director - Warren Knight warren.knight@kpmmedia.co.uk Tel: 01322 476818

Designer – Warren Gibb warreng@thecgl.co.uk Tel: 01293 773221

### **GROUP MD**

PRODUCTION

Nigel Copp Nigel.copp@kpmmedia.co.uk Tel: 01322 662289

### SALES

Sales Manager – Danny Grange danny.grange@kpmmedia.co.uk Mob: 07867 418994 Tel: 01322 476811

Sales Assistant – Gino Leroy gino.leroy@kpmmedia.co.uk Tel: 01322 476819

### PUBLISHER

kpm media – Unit 5, Gateway 20/25 Trading Estate, London Road, Swanley, Kent. BR8 8GA Tel: 01322 662289



### NEWS



All the latest news, round ups and information from across the cleaning sector.

### OPINION

06 A recent lifestyle survey declared that shopping was the most popular leisure pursuit for families, a new reality well understood by shopping centre managers. Bernard McCauley, group managing director of Grosvenor Services.

### **OPINION**



Barbour explains personal protective equipment in the workplace.



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### 🛞 NEWS

### OUTSTANDING ACHIEVER IN THE CLEANING INDUSTRY RECEIVES ROYAL APPROVAL

Robert Urquhart, a member of the Worshipful Company of Environmental Cleaners, received a Livery Companies' City & Guilds Award from Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal at a ceremony at Buckingham Palace earlier this month.

The Awards are given in recognition of 'Outstanding Achievement' as a City & Guilds of London Institute learner or tutor.

Urquhart has been instrumental in setting up and running the cleaning workshops at Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) Rochester, Kent. He started work there 16 years ago where he was assigned to put together a cleaning qualification for offenders.

Urquhart has now developed the course he delivers from the British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICS)

qualification to the City & Guilds NVQ level 2 in cleaning and support services. He has gained his assessors qualification and teaching qualification in both courses.

Urquhart has built a good working partnership with prison staff and heads of departments, to ensure learners have access to clean different areas and types of surfaces to meet the course criteria.

His work aims to give course participants the best opportunities once they have been released from prison.

The variety of cleaning courses on offer at the prison lays the foundations for learners to enter the cleaning industry qualified with sufficient



work experience to gain employment. Urquhart is continuing to improve the progress for his learners by working with employers to get them employment opportunities.

The Worshipful Company's Master, Philip Morrish, and Clerk, Maureen Marden, were in attendance to see him receive this deserved recognition.

# SWC MAKES THE GRADE IN CITY OF LONDON CONTRACT WIN

Property management firm, Cushman and Wakefield, has appointed Specialist Window Cleaning (SWC), part of Incentive FM Group, to provide cleaning services at 41 Lothbury, in the heart of London's Square Mile.

SWC will be responsible for cleaning all the external windows of the 7-floor serviced office building every other month, in addition to a six-month and annual deep clean.

Due to the building retaining its traditional façade and many of it original features, SWC will be using a combination of window cleaning methods including the use of eye bolts to ensure that the small intricate windows are kept to a high standard of cleanliness. This will be supplemented by a team using a small internal and external cradle. All work will be undertaken at weekends to ensure that there is no disruption to the operation of the building. Speaking about the contract, Anton Beck, building manager at 41 Lothbury, said:

"This is a highly prestigious building which is home to some of the world's leading businesses. It is extremely important that its stunning façade is kept clean and, having worked with SWC previously,

I am certain they will deliver the exceptional standards we require."



### **KEEP BRITAIN TIDY LAUNCHES CLEAN PLACES AWARD**

Keep Britain Tidy has launched a new award to recognise public places that have achieved the very best standards of cleanliness and environmental quality.

The Keep Britain Tidy Award is part of the organisation's ongoing Clean Places campaign, to encourage everyone to play their part in creating places that are clean and litter-free, and follows its latest National Perceptions Survey which revealed that a clean, litter-free environment is ranked important by 89 per cent of people but only 59 per cent are satisfied with the cleanliness of their neighbourhood.

The first three winners of the new award are; Bullring Shopping Centre in Birmingham, Alder Hey Children's Hospital in Liverpool and the Barbican Centre in London.

Keep Britain Tidy chief executive, Allison Ogden-Newton, said:

"Our National Perceptions Survey shows just how important clean, litter-free places are to people and all three award winners have demonstrated a commitment to creating a clean environment for their visitors and customers and have proved to our judges that they are managing their litter and waste responsibly.

"We hope that these three fantastic places will be the first of many to be flying a Keep Britain Tidy Award."

Zed Major, facilities manager at the Barbican Centre, commented:

"It's a great honour for the Barbican Centre to be awarded the accreditation from such a wellrespected organisation as Keep Britain Tidy.

"The feedback from the inspection gave us incredibly useful guidance and confidence in the way we engage with the visiting public and our sustainability strategy throughout the Barbican Centre campus, for which we are very grateful.

"The Award is a very powerful tool to promote to visitors and the public the passion we have for sustainability at the Barbican Centre and we very much look forward to working with Keep Britain Tidy over the coming year and beyond."

### INCENTIVE QAS IS THE 'SMART' CHOICE FOR ORANGEBOX

The specialist cleaning division of Incentive FM Group, Incentive QAS, has won a cleaning contract with Orangebox, an innovative design company that delivers flexible workplace solutions.

Incentive QAS will be responsible for the daily cleaning of Orangebox's new Smart Working environment in Clerkenwell which displays a wide range of its furniture and concepts to potential customers. The space is also used for events during the evenings and as a hot-desk area for the company's sales representatives throughout the day.

The new building spans five floors and will see Incentive QAS providing an early morning daily cleaning team who will also supply washroom services, periodic deep cleaning and window cleaning.

Liz Walker, marketing manager at Orangebox, commented:

"This new showroom is a focal point for our staff and clients and plays a crucial role in driving new business. Therefore it is vital that it is kept exceptionally clean and presentable at all times and we believe that Incentive QAS has the skills and commitment to deliver this."

### **INDUSTRY INSIGHT**

NEWS 🛞

To be used only by protessional users hoting contribution demonstrating compliance with UK rodenticids stewardship regime requirements. Read the label before use. Using this product in a manner that is inconsistent with the label may be an offense. Refer to CRRU UK Code of Best Practice for guidance. When this product is supplied to a user for the control of rodents, it shall only be supplied to a protessional user holding certification demonstrating compliance with UK rodenticids stewardship requirements.



## LABEL CHANGES TO ALL RODENTICIDES

Pest controllers are being reminded that all product labels of 'Second Generation Anti-coagulant Rodenticides' (SGAR's) will need to be revised this year, in line with CRRU (Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use).

Product labels will include a new 'stewardship phrase' stating that it can only be applied by certified individuals, who are able to demonstrate compliance with UK rodenticide stewardship.

Bayer has amended all labels for its entire range of second generation rodenticide products. Four products that make up the Bayer Rodilon range will all come to the market at the same time with this stewardship message, during July. Richard Moseley, technical manager, Bayer, commented:

Rodilon

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"We know our products are essential to rodent control but we understand the need to address the wider environmental impact, in an industry led solution to responsible rodenticide use.

"We work very closely with CRRU and our commitment to rodenticide stewardship is crucial to ensuring that our products are used in the most responsible way possible."

As of 31 March 2017 it will be illegal to use old label products.

The move has been welcomed by the British Cleaning Council (BCC) however, it says the fines should be even higher.



ames Ostler, director and owner of Positive Environmental has been elected as vice president of the British Pest Control Association (BPCA).

Ostler has been actively engaged with the BPCA since launching his pest control company in 2010; he has been a Board member since



2013, including two years as chair of the Servicing Committee. Commenting on his new role within the association, Ostler said:

"I am delighted that my colleagues have the confidence in me to fulfil the vice presidents' role and look forward to the exciting challenges ahead. There is a strong drive to increase professionalism in the industry; my experience as a chartered environmental health practitioner will certainly help to move this forward."

The British Pest Control Association is the leading UK trade association representing those organisations with a professional interest in the eradication of public health pests. A not-for-profit organisation, it acts in the interests of its members and on behalf of the pest management industry within the UK.

Paul Rodman, president of the Association said: "The provision of pest control services to a professional standard can be an area which is overlooked, yet the economies of inadequate pest control can be catastrophic. The BPCA places great importance on promoting the highest standards of professionalism within the industry.

"We are absolutely delighted to welcome James as vice president of the BPCA; he has a wealth of experience and a real enthusiasm to make a difference."

# MITIE'S CLEANING BUSINESS APPOINTS NEW REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF LONDON

### Martin Fitch has been appointed the new London regional director of Mitie's Clean Environments business.

Fitch has over 20 years' experience in the support services industry, most recently with Interserve's acquisition of Lancasters in London. In his new role, his focus will be to expand Mitie's London portfolio, building on his wealth of experience in contract retention,

key account wins, and team development. Commenting on his appointment, Fitch said:

"I'm thrilled to be part of the Mitie team in London. The majority of my career has been spent delivering premium service solutions to the professional service sector, and I'm looking forward to continuing this approach at Mitie during very exciting times."

Bob Forsyth, managing director of Mitie's Security and Clean Environments businesses added: "Martin will be a real asset to our team. His experience, coupled with our technology-led developments, will give our clients the peace of mind that we are the expert cleaning partner they need."



### COMMENT

# GLEAMING FACILITIES MAKE SHOPPING A PLEASURE



A recent lifestyle survey declared that shopping was the most popular leisure pursuit for families, a new reality well understood by shopping centre managers. What makes a shopping centre a magnet for visitors? Fine-tuned facility services

are crucial, says Bernard McCauley, group managing director of Grosvenor Services investigates

The visit to the mall, shopping centre or designer outlet is often a day out with friends or family. Never mind the global brands and glitzy stores, retail centres have eateries, cinemas and other places of entertainment, often along with children's play areas and perhaps even dog kennels as well! Practically all needs are catered for. This complete retail leisure activity can also make the centre a tourist destination in its own right.

Within the centres or outlets, all these attractions compete for visitors' attention, and spend. But each centre is also competing with others, and high street shopping, for footfall.

The challenge – especially given the ever-present alternative of online shopping – is to provide a superb visitor experience to satisfy the growing aspirations of customers. Joined-up support services, all operating to the same high standard, are crucial. Clean, useable and safe facilities will play their part in influencing how long and how much customers spend, and their return visits.

The policies and measures that support this kind of successful shopping centre environment are many, but here are some worth highlighting.

Centre and outlet managers need to continually measure shoppers' behaviours, through footfall and seasonal trends. But they can also benefit from the support of service providers with a flexible service model who, in turn, manage and make best use of their resources by monitoring service standards. Tailored mobile technology software, for example, can be used for bespoke audits that allow thorough checks to be recorded at regular intervals and detailed reports produced. These can then be transmitted to the shopping centre manager who, ideally, should be able not just to view the data, but to interact with it and add comments.

When selecting a provider, centre managers should also ensure that their partners will tailor and fine-tune their services to the centre's service specification. World-class retail centres require bespoke facilities management services that work effectively.

This approach is first and foremost about flexibility. The service provider must be able to respond rapidly and effectively to fast-changing requirements. It takes management skill and experience to control constantly changing schedules and rotas so that service staff, the centre managers and their customers are all satisfied. For example, for a cleaning company to achieve this, every minute spent cleaning must deliver the highest possible standards for your customers.

Success, in the form of high footfall, brings its own set of challenges. The shopping centre must accommodate crowds of people and intensive use of facilities creating greater demands on support services. For both the short and long term, service providers must ensure they use appropriate materials and equipment.

In the case of cleaning, this involves carefully considering all types of floor

coverings, fixtures and structural finishes, and selecting the right blend of specialist and/or multi-purpose machines that will get all jobs done cost-effectively. While most work will be scheduled before and after opening hours, periodic and responsive cleaning is essential to keep all areas clean and presentable without disrupting the visitors' experience. Litter or chewing gum must be quickly removed, and flooring kept spotless. This is about their safety as well as their experience. Your facility service provider should have clear policies and procedures in place and adhere to all regulatory measures.

Remember that health and safety laws exist not only to protect the public, but also you, your employees, and contractors' staff. Shopping centre managers have a duty to ensure their service provider trains its people in the use of equipment and has evidence of certification. Risk assessments of the shopping centre site should be conducted by the service provider prior to the start of the contract to ensure the safety of all those using the centre.

A top-notch service provider not only recognises that managing the customer environment is critical. They go further, realising that they also contribute to the customer experience and see the potential to enhance it. Cleaners, repair technicians, security guards and other facility service providers can also be customer service agents. They are 'touch points' for your customers. So on-site facility services teams need to be highly trained and able to interact confidently with your customers when required. A good provider will coach its staff to behave like part of your team – for instance providing help with directions to washrooms or specific shops or food outlets. So to the visitor it appears that the centre is run by one dedicated team delivering a consistently high standard of customer service.

It's not surprising that many shopping centre managers are now taking this 'one team' approach a stage further by choosing a single service provider for multiple facility services. A popular combination is the same supplier for both cleaning and security requirements. The financial and administrative benefits for the shopping centre include operational efficiencies, reductions in documentation and a single invoice system. But these arrangements also promote a partnership approach and joint working that will benefit the business and its customers in various other ways.

Working in partnership with your service provider means challenges and new ideas can be discussed openly, and the aims and values of the shopping centre are more likely to be shared by all. This opens the way for your service partner – whether they are responsible for cleaning or a package of services – to add value to what they deliver to the running of the shopping centre and enhance the retail / leisure experience for the visitor.



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# www.awards.bics.org.uk

### CELEBRATE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CLEANING INDUSTRY AT THE BICSC ANNUAL AWARDS 2016

The BICSc Annual Awards will be taking place on Thursday 15th September 2016 at the Marriott Forest of Arden Hotel & Country Club in Birmingham.

This year BICSc will be running an educational programme during the day which will be open to anyone looking to gain the latest insights into the cleaning industry, as well as an opportunity to meet the BICSc team and network with key industry professionals.

Look out for further details on this educational programme, including how to book tickets which will be announced on the BICSc website shortly.

To book your BICSc Annual Awards 2016 tickets call +44 (0)1604 678716 or visit the dedicated awards website for more information.

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# OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE CLEANING

Over recent years more and more people have become aware of the trials and pitfalls surrounding Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). Films like The Aviator and celebrities "coming out" about the illness have seen it properly enter the public consciousness. It is amazing just how much of OCD revolves around cleaning and hygiene, CHT looked to find out more

OCD is "an anxiety disorder in which people have unwanted and repeated thoughts, feelings, ideas, sensations (obsessions), or behaviors that make them feel driven to do something (compulsions)." At least according to Fox News Health.

According to the same source it affects around 2.2 million American adults. ocduk.org

states that 12 out of every 1,000 people in the UK suffer from the disorder, which equates to roughly three quarters of a million people. The site says that though OCD was once considered rare it has likely always been a common ailment, with misdiagnoses and shame on the part of sufferers preventing it becoming notorious sooner.

A person's level of OCD can be anywhere from mild to severe, but if severe and left untreated, it can harm people's performance at work and ruin their personal lives. People with OCD often suffer from related conditions such as eating disorders, anxiety and depression. As with other mental illnesses it usually begins to manifest in adolescence and there is some evidence that it may run in families. It strikes men and women equally.

### OBSESSIONS

Exactly what Fed I people obsess gern about varies possessions in certain places through to fear of certain "unlucky" numbers. Compulsions are just as wide ranging, encompassing repeating certain actions, hoarding things and even confessing imaginary sins. But it is those connected to cleaning and hygiene that concern us here.

Fear of contamination, germs and disease is possibly the most common obsession. Cleaning, washing and the like are equally common compulsions. According to anxietycare.org.uk washing and cleaning compulsions are far more common amongst women than men, unlike OCD in general. They typically manifest with people performing endlessly repeating rituals, most commonly (and notoriously) washing hands,

### 

Fear of contamination, germs and disease is possibly the most common obsession." but anything that can be cleaned often is.

### THE SITE EXPLAINS:

"The rituals are a response to an obsessive fear of contamination - and the choice of what contamination to fear is often highly illogical. For instance, some OCs have a deep fear of dog

faeces, but are not particularly worried about human faeces, or those of cats and other animals. For others, it is the other way round.

"Washing and cleaning OCs commonly feel threatened by 'germs', asbestos, radiation and even fibreglass. Those who are obsessed with dog faeces often worry about the invisible organism called toxicara canis, which is said to infect many dogs.

"It is worth noting that in all these examples, the 'real threat' is something invisible - germs, microscopic fibres, waves of radiation. OCs are of course well aware that most 'normal' people do not find these things particularly worrying."

FEATURE

All of this can have a massive impact on people's lives. Howard Hughes famously ended his life as an eccentric recluse because his condition was so bad. Other people can end up avoiding other everyday activities, ocduk.org lists some of the most common as:

- Using public toilets (fear of contracting germs from other people).
- Coming into contact with chemicals (fear of contamination).
- Shaking hands (fear of contracting germs from other people).
- Touching door knobs/handles (fear of contracting germs from other people).
- Using public telephones (fear of contracting germs from other people).
- Waiting in a GP's surgery (fear of contracting germs from other people).
- Visiting hospitals (fear of contracting germs from other people).
- Eating in a cafe/restaurant (fear of contracting germs from other people).
- Washing clothes in a launderette (fear of contracting germs from other people).
- Touching bannisters on staircases (fear of contracting germs from other people).
- Touching poles (fear of contracting germs from other people).
- Being in a crowd (fear of contracting germs from other people).
- Avoiding red objects and stains (fear of contracting HIV/AIDS from blood like stains).
- Clothes (having to shake clothes to remove dead skin cells, fear of contamination).
- Excessive tooth brushing (fear of leaving minute remains of mouth disease).
- Cleaning of Kitchen and Bathroom (fear of germs being spread to family).

For many the point is that they keep washing and scrubbing until they feel something is clean. Ordinary people will do so until they see something as being clean. The amount of time and effort people put into feeling clean can be overwhelming.

Howard Hughes is far from the only famous person to fall under one of these categories. Cameron Diaz Hollywood actress has claimed that she has ended up trapped in rooms before because she has such a phobia of touching doorknobs. Apparently she cleans the handles in her LA home so often she has removed all the paint and varnish from them. Maybe it is a Hollywood thing, Jennifer Aniston reportedly has a guest toilet that she never uses, and her own toilet that no one else ever uses.

Presidential candidate Donald Trump is another self diagnosed sufferer. The New Yorker has called hand shaking "one of the • FEATURE CLEANING

curses of American society." He is also on the record claiming: "I feel much better after I thoroughly wash my hands, which I do as much as possible." He refuses to ever shake hands with teachers because their desks are germ ridden and they spend so much time with young children.

### THE WORKPLACE

Obviously a condition like this can have an incredible impact upon offices and workforces. Indeed ocdaction.org has an entire guide called "Employing people with OCD in England & Wales." It advises employers to be aware of their duties regarding confidentiality and being prepared for sickness absences. It also gives an outline of the 2010 Equality Act which "brought together 116 separate pieces of antidiscrimination legislation into one single act which provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

"Under the Act a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities e.g. using a telephone, reading a book or using public transport etc. The Equality Act 2010 Guidance on the definition of disability produced by the Office for Disability Issues (ODI) includes OCD in its list of examples of mental impairment." Generally speaking employers are not allowed to ask job candidates about their health until after they have made an actual job offer. The exception is where "reasonable"

adjustments may be required to allow the candidate to perform their duties. The Act states that: "Disabled people are not under a legal obligation to disclose their disability or long-term health condition to you before or during their employment but if they choose not to then this may affect their ability to assert their legal rights."

### TREATMENT

As with other mental illnesses like depression, anxiety and bi-polar disorder there is no definitive cure for OCD. The two main treatments according to the NHS are medication which doesn't cure the illness but will control your symptoms by altering the balance of chemicals in your brain.

The other option is cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) which is a type of therapy that "encourages you to face your fear and let the obsessive thoughts occur without "putting them right" or "neutralising" them with compulsions." ocduk.org claims that CBT is the more effective option:

"The treatment found to be the most

.....

(III) As with other mental

illnesses like depression,

anxiety and bi-polar

disorder there is no

definitive cure for OCD"

.....

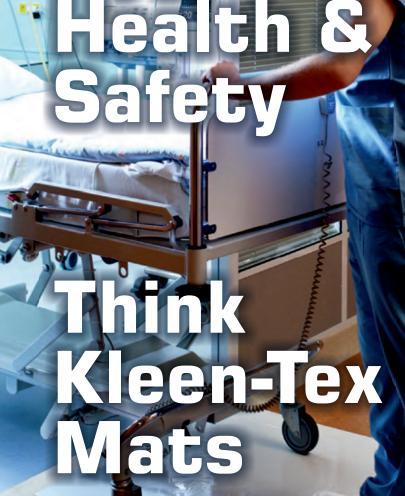
effective in successfully treating OCD is Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). In many cases, CBT alone is highly effective in treating OCD, but for some people a combination of CBT and medication is also effective. Medication may reduce the anxiety enough for a person to start, and eventually succeed in therapy.

"However what we know is that left unchecked and untreated OCD will mushroom and feed upon itself and can have the

power to consume if left unchallenged. It is therefore important to seek professional medical advice and support the moment someone recognises OCD type symptoms.

"Just as a person with some types of diabetes can learn to manage the disease by changing their diet and exercise habits, a person with OCD can learn to manage symptoms so they don't interfere with daily functioning and allow them to regain a much improved quality of life. For some people it is even possible to achieve complete recovery from OCD."





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# **EXKLEEN-TEX** THE MAT SPECIALIST

01204 70 50 70 www.kleen-tex.co.uk

# SCHOOLING CLEANERS

Cleaning in schools and colleges is very different from cleaning a normal office, there are a whole host of specific rules, regulations and advice to take into account. CHT casts its eye over some of the most important

According to www.gov.uk in January A2012, there were 8.2 million pupils attending 24,372 schools in England (including nursery schools, statefunded primary schools, state-funded secondary schools, special schools, pupil referral units and independent schools.) That's a lot of space that needs cleaning, with an incredibly high footfall.

There are obviously a whole host of reasons why schools are a different proposition to adult workplaces. These range from the unique environments, to the unusual opening hours via children's weaker immune systems. Seasonal changes can wreak havoc when hordes of children trample fallen leaves or snow through the corridors add in the inevitable littering and spillages and you begin to see the size of the challenge.

### **DIFFERENT LOCATIONS**

Your average secondary school in the UK will boast classrooms, corridors, offices, canteens, dining halls, assembly and sport halls, changing rooms and sometimes gyms and swimming pools. Just for starters all of these places will need a different type of flooring, from carpets through to vinyl with the changing rooms and showers needing non slip floors. All of these will need to be cleaned differently. Each room will need different chemicals and equipment as well.

### HOURS

Though people might just assume that there is plenty of time to clean a school either before 9 or after 5 this isn't necessarily the case. Activities are common place both before and after school with breakfast clubs, sports and clubs. You might also get local community activities taking place.

Because of this it is now normal to see schools being cleaned during "work hours" and this presents even more challenges. Quiet is of paramount importance, not just if coursework or exams are underway, but just for learning in general. Furthermore in a place full of young children cordless machines would be preferable to prevent trips and falls. 11

Seasonal changes can wreak havoc when hordes of children trample fallen leaves or snow through the corridors"

### HEALTH

Schools and colleges are like Disneyland for germs and if the premises aren't kept perfectly clean then you are likely to see half the faculty and student body absent. Public Health England recommends the environment, including toys and equipment, should be cleaned frequently, thorough and follow national guidance. "For example, use colour-coded equipment, COSHH and correct decontamination of cleaning equipment. Monitor cleaning contracts and ensure cleaners are appropriately trained with access to PPE."

Other expert advice columns also point out that the younger a person is the more likely they are to get ill and suffer from disorders like asthma. The type of chemicals employed by your cleaning operatives could play a key role in keeping pupils, not to mention the operatives themselves.

The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention also have plenty of recommendations:

### 1. KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CLEANING, DISINFECTING, AND SANITISING

Cleaning removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects. Cleaning works by using soap (or detergent) and water to physically remove germs from surfaces. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces or objects. Disinfecting works by using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces or objects. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

Sanitising lowers the number of germs on surfaces or objects to a safe level, as judged by public health standards or requirements. This process works by either cleaning or disinfecting surfaces or objects to lower the risk of spreading infection.

### 2. CLEAN AND DISINFECT SURFACES AND OBJECTS THAT ARE TOUCHED OFTEN

Follow your school's standard procedures for routine cleaning and disinfecting.

Typically, this means daily sanitizing surfaces and objects that are touched often, such as desks, countertops, doorknobs, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, faucet handles, phones, and toys. Some schools may also require daily disinfecting of these items. Standard procedures often call for disinfecting specific areas of the school, like bathrooms.

Immediately clean surfaces and objects that are visibly soiled. If surfaces or objects are soiled with body fluids or blood, use gloves and other standard precautions to avoid coming into contact with the fluid. Remove the spill, and then clean and disinfect the surface.

### 3. SIMPLY DO ROUTINE CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

It's important to match your cleaning and disinfecting activities to the types of germs you want to remove or kill. Most studies have shown that the flu virus can live and potentially infect a person for only 2 to 8 hours after being deposited on a surface. Therefore, it is not necessary to close schools to clean or disinfect every surface in the building to slow the spread of flu. Also, if students and staff are dismissed because the school cannot function normally (e.g., high absenteeism during a flu outbreak), it is not necessary to do extra cleaning and disinfecting.

Flu viruses are relatively fragile, so standard cleaning and disinfecting practices are sufficient to remove or kill them. Special cleaning and disinfecting processes, including wiping down walls and ceilings, frequently using room air deodorisers, and fumigating, are not necessary or recommended. These processes can irritate eyes, noses, throats and skin; aggravate asthma; and cause other serious side effects.

### 4. CLEAN AND DISINFECT CORRECTLY

Always follow label directions on cleaning products and disinfectants. Wash surfaces with a general household cleaner to remove germs. Rinse with water, and follow with an EPA-registered disinfectant to kill germs. Read the label to make sure it states that EPA has approved the product for effectiveness against influenza A virus. > FEATURE EDUCATION

If an EPA-registered disinfectant is not available, use a fresh chlorine bleach solution. To make and use the solution:

- Add 1 tablespoon of bleach to 1 quart (4 cups) of water. For a larger supply of disinfectant, add ¼ cup of bleach to 1 gallon (16 cups) of water.
- Apply the solution to the surface with a cloth.
- Let it stand for 3 to 5 minutes.
- Rinse the surface with clean water.

If a surface is not visibly dirty, you can clean it with an EPA-registered product that both cleans (removes germs) and disinfects (kills germs) instead. Be sure to read the label directions carefully, as there may be a separate procedure for using the product as a cleaner or as a disinfectant. Disinfection usually requires the product to remain on the surface for a

certain period of time.

Use disinfecting wipes on electronic items that are touched often, such as phones and computers. Pay close attention to the directions for using disinfecting wipes. It may be necessary to use more than one wipe to keep the surface wet for the stated length of contact time. Make sure that the electronics can withstand the use of liquids for cleaning and disinfecting.

### **5. USE PRODUCTS SAFELY**

Pay close attention to hazard warnings and directions on product labels. Cleaning products and disinfectants often call for the use of gloves or eye protection. For example, gloves should always be worn to protect your hands when working with bleach solutions.

Do not mix cleaners and disinfectants unless the labels indicate it is safe to do so. Combining certain products (such as chlorine bleach and ammonia cleaners) can result in serious injury or death.

Ensure that custodial staff, teachers, and others who use cleaners and disinfectants read and understand all instruction labels and understand safe and appropriate use. This might require that instructional materials and training be provided in other languages.

*Δ*Δ three quarters of students felt that the cleanliness of the schools directly impacted their health"

### **6. HANDLE WASTE PROPERLY**

Follow your school's standard procedures for handling waste, which may include wearing gloves. Place no-touch waste baskets where they are easy to use. Throw disposable items used to clean surfaces and items in the trash immediately after use. Avoid touching used tissues and other waste when emptying waste baskets. Wash your hands with soap and water after emptying waste baskets and touching used tissues and similar waste.

### WELLBEING

With so many pupils taking exams or writing coursework at any given time, as well as the general importance of education it is obviously essential to keep staff and pupils as productive as possible, as often as possible. Countless studies have now demonstrated the link between cleanliness and wellbeing/productivity.

Indeed an extensive study 'Cleanliness and Learning in Higher Education', was conducted by Jeffrey Campbell, Ph.D, chair of the facilities management program at Brigham Young University in Utah. Campbell found that cleanliness ranked above lighting, noise level and even temperature in impacting the wellbeing of students. He also found that over three quarters of students felt that the cleanliness of the schools directly impacted their health. In short, keep your schools clean!







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EXPECT

THE

When it comes to infections we are constantly told that prevention is better than cure. CHT investigates what steps can be taken to make sure you don't have an outbreak in your workplace

# UNINFECTED!

INFECTIONS



So first of all, what is an infection? Well, Saccording to medicinenet.com it's: "The invasion and multiplication of microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses, and parasites that are not normally present within the body. An infection may cause no symptoms and be subclinical, or it may cause symptoms and be clinically apparent. An infection may remain localised, or it may spread through the

blood or lymphatic vessels to become systemic (bodywide). Microorganisms that live naturally in the body are not considered infections. For example, bacteria that normally live within the mouth and intestine are not infections."

Simple enough? If not the Simple English Wikipedia describes them as:

"When another organism gets into a person's body and causes harm."

They are usually caught through physical contact with another human being, or touching something they have just touched. In a world where people can travel anywhere in the world in a matter of hours, where hundreds of people cluster aboard trains like sardines and where some office buildings house thousands of people it is hardly surprising infections are flourishing.

There isn't an awful lot cleaning firms can do about airborne viruses but fulsome cleaning routines can certainly make a dent in the presence of microorganisms in a workplace, though it is impossible to eradicate them entirely. In fact, just killing them may not even be enough, experts advocate the removal of germs otherwise the remains will just be used as food by the next invading army.

Still, prevention remains much easier (and

### Still, prevention remains much easier (and much more practical) than cure"

much more practical) than cure. In fact the steps toward prevention are much simpler than you might imagine. The NHS gives this advice:

### **CLOTHS AND SPONGES**

- Use disposable cloths or paper towels when possible.
- Re-usable cloths should be disinfected after each use.
- Wash brushes in a dishwasher regularly or clean with detergent and warm water after each use.

### **MOPS AND BUCKETS**

- Use two buckets for mopping one for detergent and the other for rinsing.
- Mops and buckets should be cleaned, disinfected and dried after each use.

### LAVATORIES

- Keep the U-bend and lavatory bowl clean by flushing after each use.
- Use a lavatory cleaner and brush every few days.
- Limescale should be regularly removed using a descaling product.
- Keep the lavatory seat, handle and rim clean by using a disinfectant.

#### **BATHS AND SINKS**

- Hygienically clean baths and sinks frequently.
- Use disinfectant if they've been used by someone who is ill.

### **SHOWERS**

- Clean shower trays as above for baths and sinks.
- If a shower hasn't been used for a long period, let it run with hot water before using it.

#### **TILES AND SHOWER CURTAINS**

- Keep tiles and grout in good condition and clean them often.
- Hygienically clean or launder the shower curtain frequently, depending on how often it's used.

### **KITCHEN**

- Ensure food preparation surfaces are hygienically clean.
- Use separate chopping boards for meat (including fish and poultry) and vegetables.
- Wash and dry your hands after handling high-risk foods such as raw meat.
- Hygienically clean surfaces immediately after use.

#### FLOORS

- Clean floors regularly to remove visible dirt with warm water and detergent.
- If soiled with vomit, urine or faeces, the floor should be cleaned using a disposable cloth and warm water, then disinfected. Make sure the floor is dry before allowing children on it.

### **CARPET AND SOFT FURNISHINGS**

- Periodically clean carpets and soft furnishings using a suitable product.
- Carpets and furnishings can be hygienically cleaned by steam cleaning.
- Curtains can be cleaned by laundering or disinfected by steam cleaning.

#### PETS AND OTHER ANIMALS

- Keep pet food separate from human food.
- Always wash your hands after touching animals, their food, toys, cages and litter trays.
- Dishes, utensils and tin openers used for pet food should be stored separately.

### TOYS

- Clean hard or plastic toys by washing them and storing them once they're clean and dry.
- Some soft toys can be cleaned in the washing machine.
- All toys and equipment should be added to a regular cleaning rota.

### LAUNDRY

- Wash your hands after handling dirty laundry.
- To prevent the spread of germs, all underwear, towels and household linen should be washed at 60C (140F) or at 40C (104F) with a bleach-based laundry product.
- Run the washing machine on empty once a week, either at a high temperature or with a chemical disinfectant to prevent the growth of germs.
- Don't leave laundry in the washing machine, as any remaining germs can multiply rapidly.

### WASTE DISPOSAL

- Foot-operated bins are better for hygiene because they reduce the risk of hands picking up germs when they touch the bin lid.
- Always wash your hands after handling waste material.
- Throw rubbish away carefully to avoid attracting vermin and insects.

At first this might sound incredibly straight forward, then you realise that a whole plethora of companies give step by step advice on how to wash your hands properly. The Centre for Disease Control, the World Health Organisation, the NHS, there is even a website called washyourhandsofthem.com. According to ons.gov.uk over 131 million

working days were lost in 2013 due to illness. It is almost impossible

to work out how many of these were down to infections rather than broken bones etc, but the proportion is doubtless high. hse. gov reports that you are most likely to come into contact with micro organisms if you work on a farm or in healthcare but it is possible (even likely) just about anywhere. Ironically the people who are safest might be those scientists

who work with microorganisms for a living. The same site reports that the most common type of infection transmitted in the workplace is diarrhoeal disease and if you still don't side with prevention over cure after hearing that you never will.

### ANTIBIOTICS

Another reason this is so important is that our main line of defense, antibiotics, is becoming less and less reliable. In May of this year the BBC reported that overuse of the medicines has seen microorganisms evolve a far greater resistance leading to things like outbreaks of MRSA in hospitals.

The article explains that: Superbugs, ââ According to ons.gov.uk over 131 million working days were lost in 2013 due to illness"

......

resistant to antimicrobials, are estimated to account for 700,000 deaths each year. But modelling up to the year 2050, by Rand Europe and auditors KPMG, suggests "10 million people could die each year -

equivalent to one every three seconds."

### **EXCUSES**

Still if all this talk of illness in the workplace has depressed you, bear in mind that in Beneden Health ran a study of over 1,000 workers and 1,000 bosses to find out the most incredible (meaning ridiculous) reasons that people have given for missing work. Some of CHT's favourties include:

• A can of baked beans landed on my big toe

- I was swimming too fast and smacked my head on the poolside
- My dog has had a big fright and I don't want to leave him
- My hamster died
- I've injured myself during sex
- My mum has died (this was the second time the person used this excuse)
- I am hallucinating
- My new girlfriend bit me in a delicate place
- My fish is sick
- My toe is trapped in the bath tap
- I'm in A&E as I got a clothes peg stuck on my tongue
- I've got a sore finger

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INFECTIONS

**FEATURE** 

It is generally assumed that being as clean as physically possible is a good thing. But then again you often hear stories of microorganisms developing resistance to antibiotics, of children who are never exposed to germs not developing a great immune system. In this article CHT asks if there really is such a things as being too clean

**B**efore we go any further, maybe we should discuss the term "atopic allergy". Atopy is a predisposition toward developing certain allergic reactions or hypersensitivities. In short experts had noticed that since 1950 the amount of allergies being reported amongst children had risen to unheard of levels. According to Heather Fraser's book The Peanut Allergy Epidemic the number of children in the UK and the US with an allergy to peanuts went from 416,000 to 4,500,000 in the space of 12 years (1997-2009).

Indeed allergyuk.org claims that: "This increase was initially seen in countries such as the UK, Europe and USA, but can now be found in all countries undergoing industrial development. The pattern of allergy is also changing – initially, the increase was in asthma and allergic rhinitis (hay fever). However, recent studies have confirmed a

> significant increase in the incidence of food allergies, in particular amongst children. In the UK, it is estimated that up to 50 per cent of children are diagnosed with an allergic condition." An allergy is when the body's immune system reacts strangely to an actually harmless

substance such as pollen, dust or nuts. Still according to allergyuk.org one in five UK children have an allergic predisposition, however if your mother has an existing allergy the risk is doubled. We also know that children with regular contact with farm animals have a lower incidence of allergy.

#### THE HYGIENE HYPOTHESIS

But why is all of this happening? Some experts think it might be explained by something called the Hygiene hypothesis. The Hygiene hypothesis suggests that: "A lack of early childhood exposure to infectious agents, symbiotic microorganisms (such as the gut flora or probiotics) and parasites increases susceptibility to allergic diseases by suppressing the natural development of the immune system."

It arose in 1989 when David Strachan proposed that the virtual eradication of infection in children's formative years might explain why the number of people suffering from asthma and hay fever exploded in the the second half of the 20th century.

In short the hypothesis states that the revolution in cleanliness in the 19th century meant that young children were no longer exposed to cholera, typhoid or

other similar diseases to anything like the degree they had been in the past. As such their immune systems didn't develop fully. In 2003 Graham Rook proposed that young humans need to be exposed to the same diseases our evolutionary ancestors were in order to develop properly functioning immune systems. In short this meant any diseases that could profligate. Though we are primarily concerned with infections here it has also been suggested that auto-immune diseases (Lupus et al) and certain types of Leukemia might be attributed to the same phenomenon. Of course hygiene and cleanliness are far from the only factors in contracting these conditions, but Strachan's hypothesis has certainly gained traction.

### STUDIES

Since the original hypothesis was proposed a whole host of studies and theories developed the underlying idea and, depending where you look, you can find a plethora of opinion to support either side.

The International Scientific Forum on Home Hygiene (IFH) studied over 20 years' of scientific data and concluded that the idea that people are living in "too clean" environments is patently absurd.

ΔΔ around 17 million
people in the UK each year
get a stomach bug. This
corresponds to to about
19 million days off work or
school."

Infections are still rampant in the UK, around 17 million people in the UK each year get a stomach bug. This corresponds to to about 19 million days off work or school. This is just stomach bugs. Colds, flu and a whole host of similar illnesses will take a similar toll.

They concluded the problem wasn't actually eradicating harmful microbes

that cause illness, but the friendly ones our immune systems evolved with back in the stone age. Some scientists suggest that rates of illness and allergic reactions have actually been increasing for centuries, if not millennia, it is only in the last five decades that we have started to notice. They say that far from new causes of allergies arising it might just be down to better diagnostic tools being developed.

Since the early 1800s humanity has introduced clean drinking water, more hygienic food, sewer systems and modern medicine. This has had very beneficial, tangible effects. But, whilst helping they may also have caused unforeseen problems by altering our relationship with the "microbrial" world. >

#### **FEATURE** INFECTIONS

Also modern environments, homes and offices, gyms and transport systems will have far fewer types of microbes than they would have done a couple of hundred years ago. Some have also suggested that moving away from "traditional" human environments like farms means we are having to adapt to an entirely new type of threat. The microbes from urban areas are entirely different from those found in rural environments. It doesn't matter how clean you think your home is.... Even immaculate properties are abound with bacteria, viruses, fungi, moulds and dust mites.

One of, if not the, most consistent finding is that children who grow up on a farm, in close proximity to animals are far less likely to develop allergies or asthma.

A guick online search will develop two camps, those who think that they Hygiene hypothesis is valid and those who think it isn't. In fact some scientists have conducted studies that found a link between the vegetation you grew up around and the likelihood you would grow up allergic to something.

Happily most seem to think that the fact that humanity has eradicated so many diseases doesn't mean we have to abandon modern medicinal and cleaning techniques. Indeed as we lose trust in antibiotics, move around the globe more freely and as our population gets older we learn more and more how important cleaning and hygiene is to not just businesses but humanity in general.

### THE FUTURE

That being said none of us should get to complacent. Gov.uk boasts a reports entitled: "Foresight. Infectious Diseases: preparing for the future. Executive Summary.

Office of Science and Innovation, London (2006)."

Produced by the UK Government's Foresight project: Infectious Diseases: preparing for the future. They say that it is of interest to:

"Policy makers concerned with infectious diseases in humans, animals and plants. It will also be of interest to a wide range of disease management professionals, people in industry and business, and researchers in natural and social sciences. The report takes an international perspective and will therefore be of interest to governments and non-governmental organisations across the world."

### SIR DAVID KING KB SCD FRS

Chief scientific adviser to HM Government, and Head of the Office of Science and Innovation commented:

"Firstly, infectious diseases are diverse and dynamic; new outbreaks occur frequently and we are discovering new infectious agents year on year. This argues the need for policies that are

One of, if not the, most proximity to animals are far less likely to develop allergies or asthma"

flexible in relation to an evolving threat, and which can address a wide spectrum of possible diseases.

"Secondly, new detection, identification and monitoring systems could

provide a step-change in our capability to manage diseases in the future. However, this potential will only be realised if the deployment of the new systems takes careful account of local systems of culture and governance, and provided the systems are integrated with effective control measures."

consistent finding is that children who grow up on a farm, in close

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## **SEBO EVOLUTION**

# FIT FOR PURPOSE!



### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in the Workplace: Employee Factsheet

### What is PPE?

PPE is equipment or clothing worn to protect the user from known hazards in the workplace.

Commonly worn items of PPE are safety helmets and safety footwear.

Other examples are:

- respirators
- safety harnesses
- ear-plugs or muffs
- safety goggles, faceshields or eye protectors
- protective gloves
- protective and high visibility clothing.

### Limitations

- PPE will only protect the user of the PPE
- it must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions never misuse PPE
- it must be in good condition to be fully effective your health or life might depend on it
- it is better for hazards to be controlled at source where possible, rather than reliance being placed on PPE.

### Make sure PPE is:

- · well looked after and properly stored when it is not being used
- appropriate for the task
- kept clean and in good repair; maintain according to the manufacturer's schedule.

### Your responsibilities:

- only use PPE in accordance with instructions and training given
- return PPE to its safe storage, where provided, after use
- take reasonable care of your PPE and report loss or defects to your employer
- never work without PPE when it is known to be necessary.

### "REMEMBER: PPE can be a life-saver; use it properly and look after it."

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### Did you know?

### Fact 1

In a study conducted for HSE around 24,000 accidents, which could have been prevented with correctly used and maintained Personal Protective Equipment were reported in a seven year period.

### Fact 2

In many cases, it is not possible to completely eliminate hazards by other means.

### Fact 3

The dangers arising from many hazardous activities can only be controlled by wearing PPE.

### Do you know?

- Why PPE is necessary, when it is to be used, repaired or replaced and its limitations?
- the dangers of working without PPE?
- the procedure for replacing PPE and reporting defects?
- where to obtain information and guidance?

If the answer to any of these questions is no, you must seek further advice and information from your health and safety representative or manager.



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