

Cleaning Contingency Planning Guide

Delivering Clean Premises in 2021



How to Plan for an Uncertain 2021

As we move into the uncertain business landscape of 2021, one of the few certainties is that cleaning and hygiene practices will continue to play a major role in helping businesses fight COVID-19. With that in mind, at Monthind we have spent many hours considering how we can use our 45 years of experience to enable businesses to deliver clean, safe working environments while remaining efficient in 2021.

Enhanced cleaning measures are essential – but so is keeping an eye on the financials

Balancing higher outgoings due to increased hygiene measures against lower, COVID-affected revenue stream is no easy task. Delivering a clean, safe environment is essential for businesses and organisations for both hygiene purposes and to build staff and customer confidence, but maintaining heightened hygiene levels while remaining efficient is an additional challenge faced by many during these extended uncharted times.

Having seen this situation develop for many customers throughout the course of 2020, Monthind has developed this downloadable guide to help organisations strike that fine balance and deliver a safe, clean and hygienic business environment without taking both eyes off the budget sheet.

In this guide, we have provided answers to the most common questions we are being asked, including:

- **When, why and how often should you deep clean?**
- **What qualifies as 'more frequent' cleaning of washrooms and regular touch points?**
- **Do air conditioning and ventilation systems require more frequent cleaning during COVID-19?**
- **What does a COVID-19 response plan look like?**

We hope you find this guide useful during these challenging times. If you require any further information and would like to talk to one of our team in more detail, call us on 01206 25300 or visit monthindclean.co.uk.

Regards,

Simon Biggs, Company Director

Monthind Clean Ltd

Glossary of Cleaning Terms

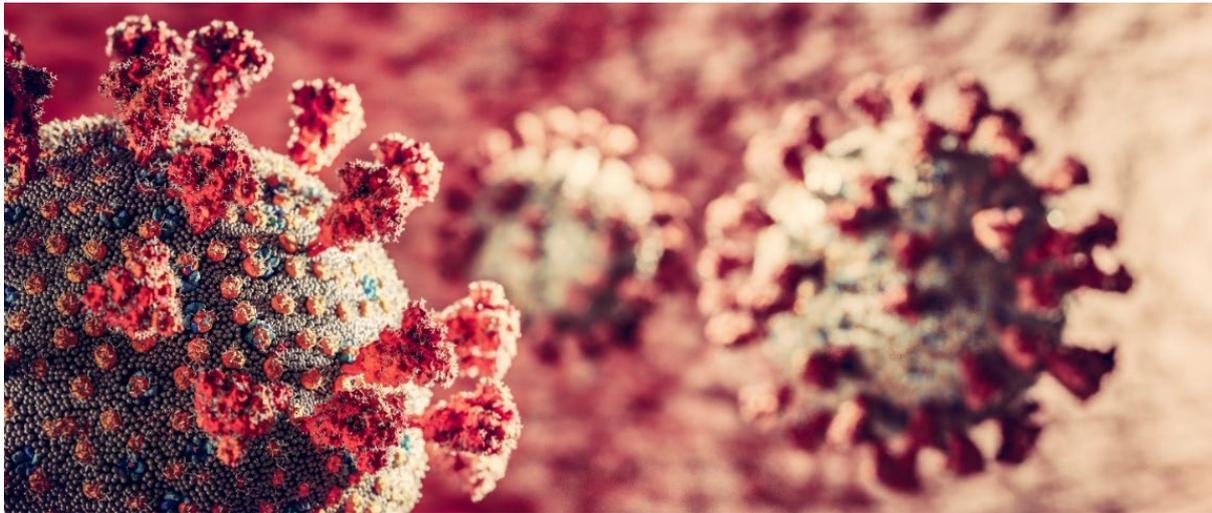
Cleaning: The removal of soiling, both visible and invisible, from a surface. The cleaning process prepares a surface for disinfection.

Sanitising: A less aggressive process than disinfection, sanitising reduces the level of germs and bacteria to a level considered safe. ***NB:** It is worth noting that, at the time of writing, a safe sanitation level for COVID-19 is yet to be established, therefore disinfection is required for areas or surfaces affected by the Coronavirus.*

Disinfecting: The removal of bacteria and germs, except bacterial spores, from a surface or object.

Meet COVID-19 and show it the door

According to the [World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](#), when someone who has COVID-19 coughs or exhales they release droplets of infected fluid. Most of these droplets fall on nearby surfaces and objects – such as desks, tables or telephones. People could catch COVID-19 by touching contaminated surfaces or objects – and then touching their eyes, nose, or mouth.



[The infection risk from a COVID-19 contaminated environment decreases over time.](#) It is not yet clear at what point there is no risk from the virus, however, studies suggest that, in non-healthcare settings, the risk of residual infectious virus is likely to be significantly reduced after 48 hours.

Regular and thorough cleaning plays a vital role in limiting the transmission of COVID-19, alongside good hygiene and social distancing. As we all move forward to create safe working environments to support the economy and invigorate our business goals, there are bound to be questions and concerns as to what is expected of employers, employees, contractors and customers to maintain a COVID-safe environment, which is why we have produced this Contingency Planning Guide.

This guide covers cleaning and decontamination advice. Should you require additional guidance for working safely during coronavirus visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-COVID-19>



Risk Analysis & Outbreak Response Planning

There are no set rules on how often premises need to be cleaned or indeed how they should be cleaned. It depends on a wide variety of factors, many of which are subject to change, such as fluctuating staff numbers, current government regulations or restrictions and latest COVID-19 intelligence. We recommend that you carry out a risk assessment and review it regularly to ensure you are maintaining a safe workplace. We are able to assist with this process or, if you prefer, our experts will carry it out for you and provide you with a comprehensive report, which can be used as a basis for a cleaning services SLA.

Information on carrying out a [COVID-19 risk assessment](#) is also available on the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website.



Responding to a confirmed case of COVID-19

Cleaning and disinfection

Public areas where a symptomatic person has passed through and spent minimal time, but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids, such as corridors, can be cleaned thoroughly as normal. All surfaces that the symptomatic person has come into contact with should be cleaned and disinfected, including all potentially contaminated and frequently touched areas such as bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab rails in corridors and stairwells. Disposable cloths or paper roll and disposable mop heads should be used to clean all hard surfaces, floors, chairs, door handles and sanitary fittings – one site, one wipe, in one direction.

Cleaning Operative Safety

At Monthind we will only clean infected areas that have been vacant for over 72 hours. Monthind are working in partnership with Hygiene Pro Clean, a containment and decontamination expert specialising in dealing with biological threats. They have developed their own spray technology which allows them to get full volume coverage of any void/space containing a potential threat. Following a 72-hour period, our operatives are able to attend your site, subject to the completion of a risk assessment.



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The minimum PPE that should be worn by any person cleaning an area following a confirmed case of COVID-19, or a person with symptoms, is disposable gloves and an apron. Hand washing guidelines of washing with soap and water for 20 seconds should always be observed following the removal of PPE.



Where a risk assessment indicates that a higher level of the virus may be present, such as where a person unwell with COVID-19 has spent 'overnight', PPE may be necessary to protect the cleaner's eyes, mouth and nose. Further advice and information can be found at the local Public Health England (PHE) and Health Protection Team (HPT).

Electrostatic Technology for Rapid Response

Where a rapid response to an outbreak is required, utilising electrostatic technology allows for premises to be fully treated up to four times faster, allowing for a safe reopening as quickly as possible.

What is Electrostatic Cleaning?

Electrostatic cleaning, or electrostatic spraying, is the process of adding an electric charge to the liquid droplets of cleaning solution during the application process. The effect makes the sprayed solution envelop your target object, resulting in an even, all-round, coating with no runs or drips.

Electrostatic spraying using up to two thirds less solution than conventional methods of application, while still attaining 360-degree coverage, plus its touchless application reduces the chance of cross-contamination.

Please note: Electrostatic spraying does not claim to kill [COVID-19](#), as does no other chemical on the market today. However, it does help prevent COVID-19 and other viral, fungal and bacterial infections from making an impact on your workplace by offering a new level of rapid response in response to potential infection.

Practising Clean – Making safe the easy option



Generic Cleaning Regime

When considering how often you are going to clean specific areas, take into consideration how many people are using the space and how they will be using it, including how mobile those people will be. For example, an environment where people will be socially distanced, such as sitting at a desk for several hours at a time, less regular cleaning will be required than an environment with people constantly moving around, interacting, or carrying out physical tasks.

Despite the need to increase the frequency of cleaning, standard cleaning products such as detergents and bleach remain effective, especially when due attention is paid to all surfaces. A particular focus should be given to surfaces and areas which are touched frequently, such as door handles, light switches, work surfaces, remote controls and electronic devices. Where possible, the temporary removal of unnecessary items, especially those which are difficult to clean, can help to make an increase cleaning regime more manageable.

How often should Frequent Touch Points be cleaned?

As a minimum, frequently touched surfaces should be wiped down twice a day, and one of these should be at the beginning or the end of the working day. As with your general cleaning practices, cleaning of regular touch points should be undertaken more often where cleaning should be more frequent depending on who is using the area, whether they are regularly entering and exiting the setting and access to handwashing and hand-sanitising facilities.

Top Tip: When cleaning surfaces, it is not necessary to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) or clothing over and above what would usually be used.

Kitchens and Communal Eating Areas



Although it is very unlikely that COVID-19 is transmitted through food, anyone handling food should continue to wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before doing so, and regularly throughout, as a matter of good hygiene practice.

Food business operators should continue to follow the Food Standard Agency's (FSA) guidance on good hygiene practices in food preparation, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) processes, and preventative practices (pre-requisite programmes (PRPs)).

Top Tip: Frequently touched surfaces, including chairs and eating surfaces, should be cleaned between uses.

Hand Hygiene

*"A comprehensive, targeted, yet simple to execute hand hygiene program"
"significantly reduced" hygiene-preventable incidents.*

Whether singing Happy Birthday or counting to twenty is your method of choice for ensuring the thorough washing of hands, the importance of effective, consistently applied hand hygiene cannot be overstated in the fight to prevent the transmission of COVID-19.

The provision of regular access to hand sanitiser stations, including ensuring regular refilling, is essential for all premises.

[Click here for more information on effective hand hygiene.](#)



Top tip: Ensure you have access to reliable janitorial services and supplies to ensure you remain unaffected by supply shortages.

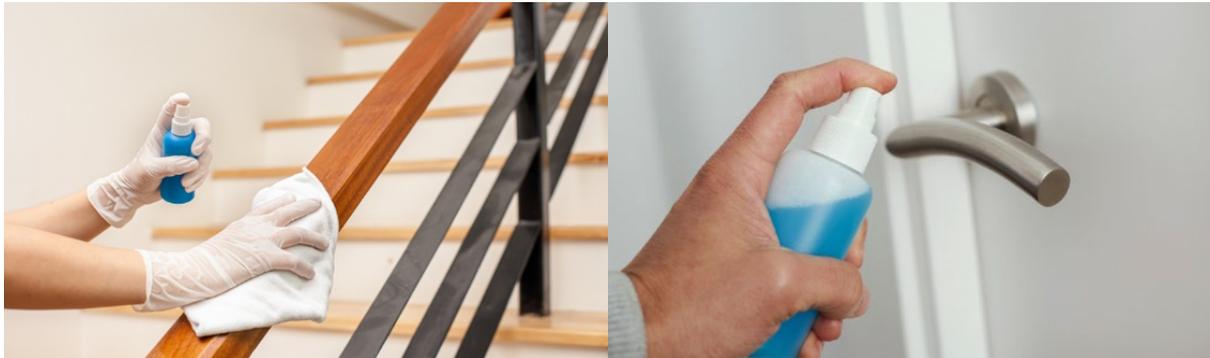
Deep cleaning

When, Why and How often?

Periodic deep cleaning delivers a multitude of benefits at any time, including;

- **Ensuring legislative compliance requirements**
- **Providing a robust response to specific hygiene problems**
- **Maintaining an acceptable base level of cleanliness**

However, during a pandemic, it becomes a fundamental part of any cleaning regime to ensure a hygienic and safe working environment is delivered and maintained.



A proper deep cleaning process should ensure the thorough cleaning and disinfection of every surface, appliance or piece of furniture, including your hardest to reach areas and known germ harbours. Frequent touch points, such as door handles, light switches, and technical equipment, should be targeted alongside infrequently cleaned areas such as heating equipment, light fixtures and ceiling fans.

Monthind's deep cleaning operatives have the capability to undertake and successfully deliver exceptional deep cleaning services to all levels of project. The expertise held by our specialist deep cleaning operatives allows Monthind to carry out work quickly and efficiently using both chemical and steam-based technology.

The required frequency of effective deep cleaning is dependent on both the use and the nature of the area involved. For more information about a realistic and cost-effective deep cleaning schedule for your organisation, speak to a member of the Monthind Clean team today on 01206 215300 or visit monthindclean.co.uk.

Top Tip: For areas that could be missed on daily cleans and for regular touch points and surfaces protect your business, staff and customers with deep cleans.

Washrooms



Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned regularly. Adequate hand washing facilities should always be provided, which should include running water, liquid soap and a non-contaminating drying method such as paper towels or hand driers. Where cloth towels are used, these should be strictly for individual use only and laundered in accordance with washing instructions.

Waste

Routine waste can be disposed of as normal, including the placing of used cloths or wipes in waste bins or bags. It is not necessary to use an extra bag or store for additional time before disposal.

Top Tip: Waste only requires segregation where a case of COVID-19 has been confirmed, or an individual in the setting has displayed symptoms.

Steam cleaning

An enemy to coronavirus, but a friend to your carpeted areas

Carpet may be a surface not regularly touched by the hands, but it is not exempt from virus spread, and germs become attached to carpet fibres when people cough, sneeze or talk and the spray falls to the floor. Carpets can also collect germs from people walking substances into your facility on the [soles of shoes](#).

How long does COVID-19 survive on carpet?

The infectious lifespan of the COVID-19 virus depends on humidity, temperature and the porosity of the surface hosting the virus. How this relates to specific surfaces such as carpet remains unknown for the new strain of coronavirus. Similar viruses, such as SARS and MERS, can survive for anywhere from 2 hours to 9 days, while [some virus strains, such as Norovirus, can live for up to 12 days in your carpet, even when regularly vacuumed](#).

Are carpets always as clean as they look?

Whether your facility has known cases of coronavirus or not, carpets are a known germ harbour. Your typical carpet contains as many as 200,000 bacteria per square inch – almost 29 million per square foot – and every square foot of a clean looking carpet could be hiding a pound of dirt.

The fibrous texture of carpets also acts as a natural filter for the air in your facility, trapping dirt, dust and germs. While this is great for the people within your building, it only adds to the germs collecting in your carpets, which aren't easily removed by even the most powerful vacuums.

Should you get carpets professionally cleaned after COVID-19?

Proven methods to create conditions inhospitable to the infectious lifespan of viruses are employed regularly by professional carpet cleaning. Steam cleaning is the most appropriate technique for killing viruses living in your carpets, due to the high temperatures involved in the process. [Research](#) into viral outbreaks has supported the practice following an outbreak, and the use of steam cleaning to remove germs from carpets is also considered effective by the [NHS](#).

While recommendations for removing COVID-19 from carpet can only be based on existing methods for dealing with general coronaviruses, having your carpets professionally steam cleaned can help ease your mind about the presence of the virus. The issue of cleaning carpets is especially sensitive in facilities such as nurseries and schools, in particular primary, where younger children are likely to sit on, and touch, the carpets – which, of course, increases the likelihood of children coming into contact with any germs harboured by your carpets.

Air Conditioning & Ventilation Systems

Do they require more frequent cleaning during COVID-19?

Heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems are used to maintain indoor air temperature and humidity at healthy and comfortable levels. According to [WHO](#), a well-maintained and operated system can reduce the spread of COVID-19 in indoor spaces by increasing the rate of air change, reducing recirculation of air and increasing the use of outdoor air. Recirculation modes (which recirculate the air) should not be used. HVAC systems should be regularly inspected, maintained, and cleaned.

As identified in the latest [Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies \(SAGE\) guidance](#), system and filtration efficiency may have an effect on transmission so it is important to include maintenance and cleanliness in your safe working environment planning.

Top Tip: Make sure HVAC systems are included in your pandemic cleaning schedule and that recirculation modes are disabled where possible.

Peace of mind working with Monthind Clean

Cleaning to be COVID-19 compliant may be new, but Monthind has been operating in challenging and potentially hazardous environments for over 45 years. We place health and safety at the centre of all our operations. The health and well-being of our cleaning operatives, staff members, clients and the general public is our first priority.

From site-specific risk assessments, staff training and certification, specific policies and industry standards, Monthind Clean leads the way in delivering safe, compliant services.

Independent audits are carried out by our business compliance department at every site, assessing cleaning operation, site health and safety, training requirements and cleaning standards. We achieved double ISO accreditation in 2018 and have been ISO certified for 26 consecutive years.

For specific advice on how your organisation can deliver clean during COVID-19 and beyond, contact Monthind Clean today on 01206 215300 or visit monthindclean.co.uk.