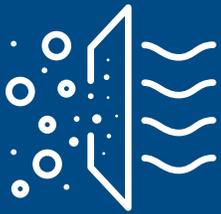


# **HVAC is More Essential than Ever, and So are You.**



Social distancing. Sheltering in place. Slowing the spread. No matter what you call it, or how you are doing it, most people are adjusting to a new normal as the world's scientists and medical experts are racing to develop effective treatments and vaccinations for COVID-19.

## **What does this all mean to the HVAC industry in general and your business in particular?**

According to ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers), "Ventilation and filtration provided by heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning systems can reduce the airborne concentration of SARS-CoV-2 and thus the risk of transmission through the air."<sup>1</sup>

In other words, your role as an HVAC contractor, and ICP's role as a leader in HVAC systems and equipment have become more essential than ever. And we say, "challenge accepted."

## **What is ICP's response?**

As we partner with our amazing network of professional HVAC contractors to provide systems and service in the shadow of COVID-19, ICP is proceeding with the utmost concern for the health and safety of everybody. And just as we have always provided homeowners with home comfort solutions they can trust, we are now providing guidance from the national experts in health and occupational safety for direction on delivering safe, responsible service for our customers.

As a starting point, the content that follows has been edited from the CDC and the Department of Labor / OSHA web sites.



## Recommendations from the CDC <sup>2</sup>



### 1. Encourage/remind employees to follow CDC guidelines for slowing the spread of COVID-19:

- Don't go to work if you are sick
- Wash your hands frequently with soap & water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or use the inside of your elbow. Throw used tissues in the trash and immediately wash hands
- Clean AND disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails and doorknobs
- Avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices or other work tools



### 2. Establish workplace social distancing as recommended by state and local health authorities:

- Avoid large gatherings and maintain distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others when possible
- Allow flexible worksites (work from home when possible)
- Institute flexible work hours (staggered shifts when possible)
- Increase space between employees at the worksite
- Postpone non-essential meetings or events
- Downsize operations



### 3. Consider creating a healthier work environment with improvements in ventilation, respiratory etiquette/hand hygiene and worksite cleaning/disinfecting:

- Increase ventilation & percentage of outdoor air into the system
- Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles
- Provide soap & water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol
- Place hand sanitizer in multiple locations to encourage hand hygiene
- Display posters in high traffic areas promoting hand hygiene & "stop the spread" messaging
- Discourage handshaking
- Routinely clean and disinfect all frequently touched surfaces
- Provide disposable wipes that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-Cov-2
- If a sick employee is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, follow the CDC cleaning and disinfection guidelines

## OSHA Recommendations for HVAC Technicians (and other home repair/service contractors)<sup>3</sup>

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration provides detailed guidelines for in-home repair services at [www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19](http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19).

**Here is a brief summary of these guidelines, so homeowners can get an idea of what to expect when a contractor visits the home:**

- Assess the risk for worker exposure based on community spread of COVID-19, and whether the homeowner has been exposed to or is having symptoms of COVID-19
- Determine the urgency of the job – routine maintenance, system repair or complete system replacement
- Determine availability of physical barriers from occupants exposed to COVID-19 using closed doors, walls or plastic sheeting
- Have employer/employee education on local, state and federal guidance regarding COVID-19
- Train employees on social distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and use/disposal of PPE
- Establish in-home practices such as separation from exposed/infected occupants, request occupants to observe respiratory etiquette, discontinue of service if necessary, and establish good airflow/ventilation
- Establish safe work practices with regards to gloves, disinfectants, sanitizers, distancing, physical contact and any shared items. Encourage payment by electronic means.
- Workers likely will not need additional personal protective equipment (PPE) other than those already routinely used



## A Final Word

We encourage all ICP dealers and distributors to follow all local, state and federal guidelines for operating their businesses under current COVID-19 restrictions. The CDC, OSHA and ASHRAE all provide detailed information on their web sites that can help guide your decisions and policymaking.

We sincerely appreciate our entire network of ICP distributors and dealers, and look forward to the day we can return to a more normal “business as usual” approach to providing innovative and energy-efficient indoor comfort to homes across North America.

### SOURCES:

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<sup>1</sup> [www.ashrae.org](http://www.ashrae.org)

<sup>2</sup> [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

<sup>3</sup> [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)



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