



Safety and Environmental Newsletter

April 2020 – 96th Edition

SLOWING THE SPREAD

Most of us by now wish we had never heard the term “social distancing” but it is of course a current necessity to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. Other important factors are frequent hand washing (for at least 20 seconds) and cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. If you are out of commercial cleaners the CDC and EPA recommend: 1/3 cup bleach per gallon of water or 4 teaspoons per quart (wear chemical resistant gloves when cleaning). The main route of entry is through inhalation and the N95 respirator is the primary deterrent.

Since the supply of N95’s are reserved for health care and first responders, the CDC is encouraging the general public to use cloth face coverings if N95’s are not available.

The following link provides instructions for making a cloth face cover: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.

The adjacent illustration shows how to put on and take off a respirator or covering. It’s important to note the removal procedure (do not put your hands on a potentially contaminated cover).

Putting On The Respirator



Position the respirator in your hands with the nose piece at your fingertips.



Cup the respirator in your hand allowing the headbands to hang below your hand. Hold the respirator under your chin with the nosepiece up.



The top strap (on single or double strap respirators) goes over and rests at the top back of your head. The bottom strap is positioned around the neck and below the ears. Do not crisscross straps.



Place your fingertips from both hands at the top of the metal nose clip (if present). Slide fingertips down both sides of the metal strip to mold the nose area to the shape of your nose.

Removing the Respirator



DO NOT TOUCH the front of the respirator! It may be contaminated!



Remove by pulling the bottom strap over back of head, followed by the top strap, without touching the respirator.



Discard in waste container. WASH YOUR HANDS!



Safety and Environmental Newsletter

April 2020 — 96th Edition

Energy Saving Tips While Working from Home

Teleworking will most likely have an impact on your individual carbon footprint. Working at home means more devices plugged in, more lights turned on, and more operation of your home HVAC systems if you previously set back your thermostat while at work. While an increase in energy consumption is inevitable, there are small habits you can build now to reduce your footprint without compromising comfort.



Daylighting

Lighting makes up 5% of the average American household's energy consumption according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Consider taking advantage of natural daylight to light up your work-space instead of using artificial lights. As an added bonus, studies have shown that daylighting improves productivity and comfort level. The best way to get even lighting throughout the day is to use North or South facing windows. More information about daylighting can be found on the Department of Energy's website (<https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/save-electricity-and-fuel/lighting-choices-save-you-money/daylighting>)

Plug Load Management

You may notice that when our home becomes our office we have our laptops, chargers, monitors, and other devices plugged in more than usual. The power draw you should be on the alert for isn't while your devices are in use, but when you are done with the device and keep it plugged into the outlet. Devices that are off, but still plugged in, can still draw power and cost you money! These phantom loads cost the American household on average \$100 annually according to the Department of Energy and can easily be eliminated.



The cheap obvious way to eliminate phantom loads is to unplug the device when you are done however that can be tedious to do especially if you have multiple devices. A handy alternative is to invest in power strips. Power strips are not only good for increasing the amount of devices you plug in per outlet but also come with a power button that you can switch on and off to ensure no energy is being wasted once you are done for the day. Another alternative is to buy energy star rated devices which have the ability to work efficiently while in use and cut off power on their own after a period of inactivity.

Heating and Cooling

HVAC systems consume over half of American's electricity use and are vital to providing comfort to our homes. The biggest cause of wasted energy from HVAC is due to outside air infiltration from cracks, improperly sealed door frames, and even electrical outlets which will cause your equipment to work harder than it needs to. Consider solving these issues by:

- Caulking any cracks you can find on the exterior of your home,
- Adding weather stripping to your door frames, and
- Covering unused outlets with safety caps.

A great place to start is to visually inspect your home's exterior for cracks. Next you can find infiltration spots by using an infrared (IR) camera or placing your hand around doorways and outlets and feeling for a draft.



For more energy saving information, contact Ed Baca at edward.f.baca@nasa.gov