

Guidelines for Sanitation Workers: Desludging Operators (DSO)

Part-I (Awareness on Spread of COVID-19 and general preventive measures)

How is the novel coronavirus get transmitted?¹

1. The virus mainly spreads from person to person through respiratory droplet transmission in close contact.
2. The virus can survive on surfaces and can also be transmitted as a contact infection by handling materials or surfaces contaminated with the sputum or respiratory droplet of an infected person.

How to stay safe?- General preventive and mitigation measures

The most effective preventive measures in the community include:

1. Wash your hands regularly with an alcohol-based hand rub or with soap and clean water. If your hands are visibly dirty use only soap and water.
2. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
3. Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. Cough/ sneeze into a tissue or flexed elbow and immediately dispose of the tissue.
4. Wear a medical mask if you have respiratory symptoms and wash hands using soap after disposing of the mask.
5. Maintain physical distance (a minimum of 1 metre) from persons with respiratory symptoms.
6. Avoid unnecessary travel and stay away from large groups of people.
7. Stay at home if you feel unwell.
8. Use headphones/ speaker phones when using mobile phone to avoid touching face.

Part II (Specific measures to be taken by Desludging Operators)

Recommended good practices for Desludging Operators (DSO)

1. Obtain ID card or permission letter from the ULB and always carry them for movement during the lockdown period.
2. Work clothes must be worn before starting the day's work. Always use mask, gloves, footwear and appropriate clothing (like long sleeved shirt, long trousers) before starting desludging operations.
3. Ensure hand sanitizers and soap are available in the desludging vehicle.
4. While desludging, maintain physical distance (1m) with members of households. Use hand sanitizers frequently.
5. Never enter any septic tank.

¹ World Health Organization. (2020). *Water, sanitation, hygiene and waste management for the COVID-19 virus. Technical Brief*. 3 March 2020.

6. After the sludge is emptied from septic tank, clean the pipe using disinfectant and place it back in the truck. Wash hands and any surface which came in contact with fecal sludge using soap.
7. After reaching the FSTP reconnect the pipe, open the release valve and transfer the fecal sludge to the receiving facility.
8. Avoid spillage of fecal sludge throughout the operations. In case of spillage sprinkle lime powder over the spillage and clean the surface using disinfectant.
9. Wash hands after performing any task with possible exposure to fecal sludge.
10. Working clothes and reusable PPE must be cleaned thoroughly using water added with disinfectant.
11. Wear personal clothes at the changing area before leaving from work.

Part III (Choice of disinfectant and PPE)

Choice of Disinfectant

1. Hand wash- preferred option:
 - a. Soap and water
 - b. Alcohol-based hand rub (if hands are not visibly dirty)¹
2. Sodium hypochlorite at 0.5% (equivalent 5000ppm) for disinfection of surfaces and reusable gloves
3. Mildly alkaline all-purpose detergent for cleaning surfaces²

Choice of PPE

1. Cloth mask
2. Gloves
3. Head band and Wrist band
4. Footwear covering whole feet/ gum boots

¹ World Health Organization. (2020). *Water, sanitation, hygiene and waste management for the COVID-19 virus. Technical Brief*. 3 March 2020.

² Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. *Cleaning guidelines for the prevention of covid-19 infections*. [Online]. 2020. [Accessed 28 March 2020]. Available from: <https://www.ttl.fi/en/cleaning-guidelines-for-the-prevention-of-covid-19-infections%e2%80%af/>

How to put-on and take off PPE³

HOW TO PUT ON AND TAKE OFF
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

How to put on PPE (when all PPE items are needed)

Step 1
Identify hazards & manage risk. Gather the necessary PPE.
- Plan where to put on & take off PPE.
- Do you have a buddy? Mentor?
- Do you know how you will deal with waste?

Step 2
Put on a gown.

Step 3a OR **Step 3b**
Step 3a - Put on face shield.
Step 3b - Put on medical mask and eye protection (e.g. eye visor/goggles)

Note: If performing an aerosol-generating procedure (e.g. aspiration of respiratory tract, intubation, resuscitation, bronchoscopy, autopsy), a particulate respirator (e.g. US NIOSH-certified N95, EU FFP2, or equivalent respirator) should be used in combination with a face shield or an eye protection. Do use seal check if using a particulate respirator.

Step 4
Put on gloves (lower cuffs).

How to take off PPE

Step 1
- Avoid contamination of self, others & the environment
- Remove the most heavily contaminated items first

Remove gloves & gown
- Peel off gown & gloves and roll inside, out
- Dispose gloves and gown safely

Step 2
- Perform hand hygiene

Step 3a
If wearing face shield:
- Remove face shield from behind
- Dispose of face shield safely

Step 3b
If wearing eye protection and mask:
- Remove goggles from behind
- Put goggles in a separate container for reprocessing
- Remove mask from behind and dispose of safely

Step 4
- Perform hand hygiene

Part IV (Hand wash)

Hand hygiene should be performed at all five moments¹

1. Before putting on PPE and after removing it, when changing gloves
2. After any toilet cleaning or maintenance activity
3. After contact with any respiratory secretions
4. Before eating
5. After using the toilet

Handwashing procedure shown below⁴

How to Handwash?

WASH HANDS WHEN VISIBLY SOILED! OTHERWISE, USE HANDRUB

Duration of the handwash (steps 2-7): 15-20 seconds
Duration of the entire procedure: 40-60 seconds

0 Wet hands with water.

1 Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces.

2 Rub hands palm to palm.

3 Right palm over left forearm with interlocked fingers and vice versa.

4 Palm to palm with fingers interlocked.

5 Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked.

6 Rotational rubbing of left thumb closed in right palm and vice versa.

7 Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa.

8 Rinse hands with water.

9 Dry hands thoroughly with a single use towel.

10 Use towel to turn off faucet.

11 Your hands are now safe.

Patient Safety

SAVE LIVES

Clean Your Hands

¹ World Health Organization. (2020). *Water, sanitation, hygiene and waste management for the COVID-19 virus. Technical Brief*. 3 March 2020.

³ World Health Organization. (2008). *How to put on and take off personal protective equipment (PPE)*. [Online]. [Accessed 30 March 2020]. Available from: [https://www.who.int/publications-detail/how-to-put-on-and-how-to-remove-personal-protective-equipment-\(ppe\)](https://www.who.int/publications-detail/how-to-put-on-and-how-to-remove-personal-protective-equipment-(ppe))

⁴ World Health Organization. *How to Handwash..* May, 2009.