

Prepare: Quiet location? No distractions? Talk aids ready?

Reason: In many ways the standards of personal hygiene will depend upon the attitude of individuals.

Why: You must look after yourself and you should expect the controller of the site to provide adequate facilities.

Outline: This talk will cover the price that you may have to pay for poor standards of personal hygiene and what you can do to prevent it.



What You Should Expect

- Enough toilets, wash basins, drying space and rest areas; the number will depend upon the number of people on site.
- Washing facilities must have hot (or warm) water, cold water, soap and some means of drying yourself.
- The opportunity to use the above facilities as necessary.
- The above facilities to be cleaned on a regular basis.
- Instructions must be provided on how to protect yourself from the effects of any hazardous substances that you may use.
- If canteens prepare food it must be in hygienic conditions.

Q: What should you do if you find that the toilets are not being cleaned often enough?

Your Side Of The Deal

- Use toilets, wash basin (or showers if provided) as necessary to maintain a high level of personal hygiene.
- Wash your hands after using the toilet and before eating.
- Leave toilets, wash basins, drying and rest areas clean and in good condition for other users.
- Avoid contamination of the skin by substances hazardous to health, e.g. cement, and comply with any instructions given.
- Do not leave or prepare your own food in unhygienic conditions.

NOTES

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TOOLBOX TALK #52

Personal Hygiene

NOTES

- If you are unwell see your doctor if necessary and stay away from work if instructed to do so.

Q: What is the correct action to take if you know the identity of someone who repeatedly vandalises the toilets?

If You (Or Someone Else) Gets It Wrong

- Gastroenteritis (sickness and diarrhoea) can be the result of poor personal hygiene.
- The transfer of harmful bacteria from hand to mouth is the usual route of entry into the body.
- Failing to wash your hands after using the toilet or handling infected material is a common route of transfer.
- You could transfer bacteria from your hand to another surface, which someone else then touches and transfers to their mouth.
- Someone else suffers because of your poor standards.
- Would you like to lose time off work (and money) because of someone else's low standards of personal hygiene?
- Other stomach complaints may be caused by failure to clean work-related substances from your hands before eating.
- Being caught or being reported for urinating elsewhere but in the toilets should lead to instant dismissal.

Do you have any questions for me?

Questions for you

Q: Where would you find information on the health hazards associated with any substances that you use?

Q: What certificate should you expect to see displayed in a site canteen in which food is provided?

Sources: [Causes of ill health: Overview - HSE](#) [The law on workplace safety - HSE](#)
[Welfare at work - Guidance for employers on welfare provisions](#) [Safe working practices - HSE](#)

For more information

Call: +44(0) 1206 396446
Email: sales@vitalgrp.co.uk
vitalgrp.co.uk