

Creating a Generation of Cleaners: Have Attitudes Changed Post-COVID

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The world is still reeling from the impact of the coronavirus, leaving many of us wondering how everyday habits will change once lockdown restrictions ease and we can get back to some sense of normality. Whether it's wearing face masks or washing your hands more regularly, the general public are now far more alert to cleanliness than they've ever been.

Harrison Wipes (<https://harrisonwipes.co.uk/>), distributors and suppliers of quality wipes globally, want to evaluate that shift of focus towards cleanliness. To that end they ran an independent survey (<https://harrisonwipes.co.uk/creating-a-generation-of-cleaners>) to 359 UK respondents to gather tangible insight on the changing attitudes to cleaning pre- and post-COVID.

82% of respondents are more aware of how they clean since the pandemic began

91% of people are more aware of cleaning measures put in place in public space

60% of workers have taken on extra cleaning responsibilities since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic

20% of new cleaning operatives have received little to no guidance from their employers on how to clean effectively

It's fair to say that for the majority of people, their general attitude toward cleaning will have changed over the last 12 months or so. With increased funding for advertisements, warnings, and more visible discussion of the topic. And Harrison Wipes' survey certainly supports this notion. According to their data, 82% of respondents have become more aware of how they clean since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

This demonstrates that more people (and by extension, businesses and organisations) than ever are thinking about why cleaning is important for them – not just as a hygiene habit, but as a proactive measure against risk. Interestingly, the data suggests that the method of cleaning is as important as the process. In other words, the 'how' and the 'why' are both given equal weight in the eyes of the general public.

This implies a level of product maturity amongst 'everyday cleaners'. They may understand that not all products act in the same way or achieve the same effect; so having the right solution for the job is more vital than cleaning for cleaning's sake.

Another point of note from Harrison Wipes' survey was how attitudes toward public hygiene have shifted throughout the coronavirus pandemic. Of the 359 people surveyed, 91% stated that they are more aware than ever of the cleaning measures taking place in public spaces – whether that be hand sanitiser stations or staff wiping down surfaces with disinfectant.

Furthermore, 75% of people indicated that they would feel more comfortable and confident that COVID-19 prevention measures were being enforced if they could see visible evidence of cleaning happening. Of course, this puts space operators (be they publicly or privately owned) into a position where they will need to maintain visibility of cleaning to ensure their customers feel safe. And it may be unreasonable

to suggest that businesses take on more cleaning staff to cover this gap – meaning existing staff members must take on some cleaning responsibilities.

Harrison Wipes' research confirms this is exactly what businesses have had to do. Their survey found that 73% of those that work outside their home have taken on additional cleaning responsibilities in the workplace in one way or another. 57% of people have been entrusted with cleaning and sanitising their own workspace, 27% have been tasked with sanitising a shared workspace and 17% have been asked to sanitise an area where the general public may be.

This data raises many issues, one of the most pressing is for the 17% of workers that are now responsible for being cleaning operatives in a public space. Specifically, whether these cleaners are given appropriate training to conduct effective, visible cleaning in these areas, and whether they are equipped with the right solutions and wipes for the job.

Interestingly, 47% of respondents also said that they felt they had to supply themselves with additional cleaning products for their work environment. This means there is a degree of overlap between those being supplied with cleaning products from their employers and those that feel they need to bring it themselves. This might suggest that the standard of cleaning products being given to staff is not good enough to ensure protection or the level of confidence in the product is low. In either case, if businesses invest in the right product that offers significant value, they will circumvent these pitfalls and create a cleaner environment overall.

Furthermore, 20% of new cleaning operatives have received little to no guidance from their employers on how to clean effectively. This indicates that businesses and institutions are still not doing enough to protect those who fall under their duty of care. As discussed, this is one of the biggest barriers to protection we could face as we look to live in the wake of COVID-19.

Stephen Harrison, Managing Director at Harrison Wipes reaffirmed his devotion to helping the public, businesses and organisations navigate these unprecedented times, "We've been working hard since the beginning of the pandemic to support the NHS, schools, factories, offices and everyone else in the fight against coronavirus."

He continued, "With the results from our survey it's clear although people are more aware of issues of cleanliness, the actual practice of cleaning and having the knowledge of which products best suit their situation is still not where it needs to be. We aim to be the link between that awareness and knowledge."

Link to full report: <https://harrisonwipes.co.uk/creating-a-generation-of-cleaners>