Can I Get THE Virus from Sitting on a Toilet?

Look, this had to come up soon or later…so it might as well be sooner. As funny as this might sound, I’ve had a few Pavecon Foreman ask me about the safety of using any public toilet, much less a “Job Site Facility,” aka Porta-Potties, Site Toilets, etc., and can they catch the COVID19 Virus. Now, before you think some people are just paranoid (Aren’t we all, just a little bit), this is actually a question that many of us have had…but were too embarrassed to ask.

Let me share a brief quote from a reputable source of health information. They write:

*”It is very unlikely that you would* [*catch*](https://www.clickondetroit.com/health/good-health/2020/03/09/can-you-get-coronavirus-from-a-toilet-seat-how-long-does-it-take-to-receive-test-results/) *the coronavirus from a toilet seat. Diarrhea is not a common symptom of COVID-19 and even if the virus could be transmitted this way, you wouldn’t catch it from sitting on a toilet seat. You would catch it from touching the toilet seat and then not washing your hands. But there is still a lot to learn about this virus so it’s extremely important to wash your hands regularly and disinfect items that you touch regularly.”*

OK, that’s from one medical source. Not to be too gross, there are other medical experts who are not ruling out the possibility that this COVID19 Virus could be spread from, hold on, “fecal particles, even urine.” Yes, fecal as in “$#!&” that is produced from pushing through a toilet experience. Now, let’s get practical guys.

First, none of us here at Pavecon, is a physician, but there is a common thread through most of the medical prevention ideas and it starts with…thoroughly washing our hands, and often.

We don’t have cameras stationed in our bathrooms, but my experience generally has been that, at public rest rooms, say in a store environment, there is a number of “users” who will simply pull-up, zip up, and leave without washing their hands. A surprisingly high number of men do little to no washing of their hands, using anti-bacterial soap, before leaving the rest room. And by the way, just wetting your hands with water is not enough…this actually can increase the reception of any virus when touched to a solid surface.

We cannot emphasize this first point enough, guys, wash your hands before and after every rest room experience, in the field or in a formal rest room. The medical field has informed us that while the toilet itself might not cause the Virus, it’s the touching of the toilet lid, flusher, followed by not washing our hands, and then touching our eyes, mouth, or nose, that provides a transportation route for the Virus. In brief…use hand-sanitizers, even towelettes if that’s all you have available, but use them!

Second, medical sources do admit that this Virus, like most viruses, can land and stay awhile on hard surfaces, such as steel, iron, wood, plastic, etc. Therefore, just as you might wear gloves and wipe down, or shoot some dis-infectant at a cardboard box delivered to your house before getting into the box, so too should you be careful when using a toilet, especially one that might have been used by countless construction works in the field. This is not your home bathroom…but potentially used by several workers, coming from a number of “who knows what” environment.

Now, you might place some gloves on and simply wipe down the toilet seat, on top and under the lip, where most of us place our hands to lift-up or set down the toilet lid. I’d also do a quick wipe on the handle to flush the toilet…if you can.

Third, guys, this is screwy times and we are being told all sorts of things to look out for and to do to protect ourselves. As we proceed through this COVID19 experience, it looks like we may be given some direction toward reopening our economy, phased in over a period of time. While many of the Division offices, that Pavecon maintain, fall into possible earlier release to do business, that doesn’t mean that we can stop with the hand washing, coughing into our folded arm, or maintaining six feet of separation. In fact, many medical experts are going to yell with prevention ideas that say, “If you’re going back to work…maintain, with even more tenacity, the hand washing, disinfecting tools, phones, shared items, etc.”

Finally, are commitment to Density actually supports much of what we have been dealing with over the past weeks. As a company, we have learned how to do what we do, with less. And as we all can’t wait to get our workers back and going strong, we need to maintain a close watch over our field protocol as it relates to sharing a Job Site Facility, and to keep our workers stocked up with needed hand-sanitizer, disinfectant, tissues, masks, protective eye wear, etc.