

## Coronavirus and Electric Hand Dryers in Public Washrooms

### Position Paper

Whilst the world experiences the global COVID-19 pandemic, it is good to see improved hygiene standards being implemented in public buildings, and that hand dryers are contributing to fulfil these standards in an efficient and sustainable manner.

Together with **hygiene**, the **protection of the environment** is a priority for our industry, and electric hand dryers form part of a global solution for energy efficient and environmentally friendly products, as opposed to non-sustainable and single-use options.

This paper demonstrates the electric Handdryer Association's (eHA) continued commitment to hygiene, sustainability and efficiency in the face of the ongoing pandemic, and explains how hand dryers are not only key in the fight against coronavirus, but also for long-term economic business survival and sustainability:

1. Hygiene – Official Recommendations vs. incorrect information and unreliable studies - electric hand dryers are a hygienic hand drying solution.

In recent years, particularly in recent months since the emergence of COVID-19, alarmist rumours about hygiene and the use of hand dryers have been circulated, leading to misinformation and confusion. However, several in-depth, independent studies over the last 30 years have shown that no single drying system (paper towels or electric hand dryers) is more hygienic than another.

In the face of the COVID-19-crisis, the US Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), and scientists at Johns Hopkins University have all categorically confirmed and gone on record to say that hand dryers do not spread the Coronavirus.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has also given a clear message in its recommendations to combat the coronavirus - **'once your hands are washed, you should dry them thoroughly using paper towels or a warm air dryer'**.



## electric Handdryer Association

Hygienic · Environmentally friendly · Efficient · Economical

Since threats like COVID-19 can lead to the circulation of misinformation, it is important to trust information only from reputable health organisations and government sources such as the CDC and the WHO.

Additionally, the hand dryer industry has added new features to dryers (e.g. HEPA filters, antibacterial materials, ionizers) to further improve hygiene for sensitive locations.

2. The use of electric hand dryers compared to other hand drying methods contributes to a low carbon economy.

Studies show that using hand dryers produces up-to 75% less carbon emissions than other systems. Additionally, our collective products have received a number of green certifications and awards. Hand dryers meet the requirements of circular economy. The design and manufacture of the dryers allow for repair, life extension and the posterior recycling of components.

3. The electric hand dryer has also proven to be the most economical hand drying system.

The use of paper or textile roll towels involves a significantly higher operating cost when factoring in purchasing, stocking and disposing of the cloth or paper towels, along with the maintenance to refill the dispensers and dispose of used towels. In the coming months, cost savings will be essential for many businesses to survive. Choosing hand dryers for public locations can help meet this goal, particularly high speed, energy efficient classes of dryers.

4. It is in the EU's interest to preserve their domestic hand dryer industry.

The hand dryer industry consists of mostly small and medium-sized companies, many of which are headquartered and manufacture within the EU. This industry has always been close to the customer, offering electrical safe products, which comply with the European safety norms. The industry continues to invest in new technologies contributing to the economy in the different countries in terms of employment and innovation.