



SAFE WORKING IN THE HOME

A guide for installers



Lakes has created this simple guide to help installers and their homeowner customers navigate the challenges of fitting bathroom products in the 'new normal'.

More information is available from the CLC and Government endorsed Trustmark's Work Safe, Safe Work campaign at www.worksafesafework.info. As it says: staying safe is a joint responsibility, and we all have a duty to protect each other. It is worth a read.

Bev Brown

Managing Director
Lakes Showering Spaces

Over the last few months, during the Covid-19 lockdown, people have spent a lot of time looking at their homes and thinking how they could be improved. In particular, many homeowners want to improve their bathroom, so they are more convenient or practical, or just look more appealing. Now homeowners are putting those plans into practice, it is important they have full confidence that work can be carried out safely. BMA is supporting all efforts by our members and partners to provide consumers with that confidence. This guide admirably provides practical advice for stockists, installers, and homeowners. I recommend it wholeheartedly to you.

Tom Reynolds

Chief Executive Officer
Bathroom Manufacturers Association



Before you start



Risk assessments

You should complete a risk assessment before each job. Your assessment should consider the risk of COVID-19 to you, your employees and your customers and what steps you can take to minimise these risks to create a safe working environment. Find out whether your customer is vulnerable or shielding, as you may need to take extra precautions if they are.

If you are self-employed or you have five employees or less, you won't need to have your risk assessment written down, but it's good practice to do it anyway.

Work remotely where you can

Make the most of the technology available to you. Use emails, phone calls and video calls to talk to your customer and agree the scope for the work before physically visiting the property for a site survey. Rather than offering printed brochures or referring the customer to a nearby showroom, why not direct them to online platforms – such as www.lakeshoweringspaces.com – where they can get a feel for what products they like.

Fixed teams

To reduce the number of people that you and your team come into contact with, work in fixed partnerships where possible. Look at your order book and decide in advance how best to pair up if you need to, and travel alone to the job site if you can.

Health check

Check with your customer before you start the job to ensure they don't have any COVID-19 symptoms and that they aren't in a period of self-isolation as a precaution. If they are, reschedule the work for a later date.

On the job



Social distancing

If you are working on an installation as a team of two, keeping the recommended 2m apart at all times may not be possible. Minimise the risk of working in close proximity by wearing a face covering and keep the room where you are working well ventilated by opening windows and internal doors.

To maintain a safe social distance from your customer, agree beforehand to have any progress updates or conversations outside and for no longer than 15 minutes. If there isn't a suitable outdoor space available, talk side-by-side rather than face-to-face.

On the job continued...

Preparing the space

Before arriving at the job site, disinfect all tools and equipment and use dust sheets to cover the floor. Prop open internal doors to avoid repeatedly touching door handles within the home.

PPE

If you are working in the home it may be difficult to maintain 2m social distancing, particularly as a team of two, so wear a face covering as a precautionary measure. It's safer and your customer will be reassured to know you are taking sensible precautions. Face coverings do not need to be medical grade PPE, it's simply to reduce the spread of the virus, even if you or they are asymptomatic (i.e. infected but not showing symptoms).

Wearing disposable gloves is not required, but you can wear them if it makes you or your customer feel more comfortable. Just remember to change them every time you enter and leave the workspace as plastic gloves can easily spread the virus from surface to surface.

Handwashing

The best way to stop the spread of COVID-19 is to regularly wash your hands. Wash them on arrival at your customer's home and at times throughout the day. On jobs where the water supply needs to be turned off, make sure you have plenty of hand sanitiser available and use it frequently as an alternative to handwashing.

Cleaning the space

As well as keeping your hands clean, it is also important to keep yourself safe by cleaning any objects or surfaces before you start that you will touch frequently in the room where you are working in – for example tiles, fixtures, taps and fittings – door handles too. This can be done using household cleaning products or wipes when you start and throughout the day and again before you leave at the end of the day. Make sure you tell the homeowner you have done this, even though they may want to clean the area too!

Food and drink

Take your own food and drinks to the property and eat outside or in the van rather than inside the customer's home.

If you can't go without a cuppa during the day, consider taking your own thermos flask and mug to minimise your contact with the customer's kitchen equipment.

If your customer asks if you'd like a drink, say no thanks, you've brought your own, because that's part of safe working practices now.

'No go' areas and use of toilets

Before you do any work, you should consider the homeowner's safety expectations and what homeowners expect of companies in the current climate. For example, they may expect you and your team to make your own plans for toilet facilities such as hiring a mobile loo. If they are comfortable with you and your team using their facilities, clean them thoroughly after use and disinfect all handles and surfaces.

Make sure you and your team are aware of the areas of their home that they are permitted to enter or use. Confirm if any parts of the property or facilities are prohibited.

Turn your radio down!

Scientists say there is an increased risk of transmission of the virus when you raise your voice or sing. Consider lowering the volume of any music you'd normally have playing in the background so you can communicate with your colleagues and your customer without having to shout.

Once the job is finished



Clear your workspace

Take home all your tools and personal belongings at the end of every day, and safely dispose of your waste, including any used dust sheets when you have finished.

Clean the surfaces

Use household cleaning products or wipes to clean down the installation space, paying particular attention to areas which have been touched frequently during the installation process. Clean down the glass, shower tray, and hardware in the shower space thoroughly, to ensure that any contaminants are removed, and give your customer the wow factor when they see their finished bathroom installation.

Contactless payment

Speak to your customer in advance about using a contactless payment method such as card payment (if you have a card reader) or bank transfer, on completion of the work. If you have paperwork that needs to be signed, ask the customer to use their own pen or sign it on their behalf with a witness.

Stay in touch

If you or one of your employees shows any symptoms of COVID-19 within a week of finishing the job or you need to self-isolate as a precaution, contact the customer to let them know.



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