

# handwashingforlife<sup>®</sup>

Overcoming Underwashing™

## Hand Drying

Single-use paper towels are a mission-critical component for effective and efficient handwashing. This duality goes beyond the task of drying to one of skin cleaning and care. Softness, absorbency, strength and speed combine to motivate workers to wash often. The friction factor that paper towels add to the drying process can not be duplicated by electric hand dryers, no matter how fast or noisy they get. Jim Mann Executive Director of the Handwashing For Life<sup>®</sup> Institute

## Paper towels remove risky biofilms that air-dryers cannot.

**Lever-free reliable dispensing of effective single-use toweling.**



*Best Practice*  
**Endorsements:**

 **Kimberly-Clark Professional\***

<http://www.handwashingforlife.com/resources/integrated-solutions/supplies/paper-towels>

These hand drying systems are endorsed by the Handwashing For Life<sup>®</sup> Institute for foodservice, food processing, hospitality, office buildings, education, and retail. The balance of paper absorbency, strength, and recyclability combine well with a versatile range of reliable touch-free dispensers.

The Handwashingforlife<sup>®</sup> Institute actively supports and recommends the products and services of members who meet the criteria for leadership in hand hygiene related interventions. These criteria include:

- + Product or service must meet Institute standard of Best Practice within applicable category.
- + Forum member must demonstrate commitment to advancing the Science of Hand Hygiene and be a top quartile supplier, as measured by:  
Customer satisfaction with initial product or service and follow-up support.

## Fact vs Fiction

These facts just might save your life and that of your business...

### Fact:

- 1] **Not in a high risk food environment. Selection of the actual paper quality for hand drying will have a major impact on both pathogen removal and frequency of washing. All paper is not the same.** Best practice paper companies invest in the right fiber selection, pulping technology, sheet forming and calendaring know how to make a best practice hand-friendly towel. Achieving the right balance of wet strength, absorbency, surface smoothness and texturing is critical to overall performance. Price per hand dried (not price per roll) is one factor to consider but as important for high risk users are skin irritation and pathogen absorbency factors. Best practice companies provide these comparisons.
- 2] **Air dryers are a poor choice for hand drying and have no place in a high risk food prep and restroom environment.** Even the fastest are slow and lack the all-important friction factor for pathogen removal. Yes, they avoid the need to recycle waste paper but savings are offset by hidden electricity usage and immeasurable losses in staff time. Beyond the economics are the problems with contaminated blower nozzles and partially dried hands.
- 3] **Clean, dry cloth towels will dry hands and remove pathogens effectively. They can be a good choice when clean and dry can be assured.** This is virtually impossible in high volume commercial environments. High traffic locations quickly swamp even the best intended servicing strategies and users are presented with a dirty, wet, contaminated, end of roll towel. Even the simple task of moving the towel to the next clean, dry location creates cross contamination. When the towel is dirty and wet the risk for cross contamination is unacceptable.
- 4] **The lowest total cost paper towel is the best practical decision. Total cost calculations must include an effectiveness factor, the amount used per hand drying occasion, and dermatological impact on the user.** A user requiring twice as much lower cost paper to dry their hands, effectively doubles the total cost of paper. When a high risk user's hands become irritated by paper roughness he or she stops washing. What is the total cost of underwashing by a high risk user? Is it a risk worth taking? Can you buy enough liability insurance? Understanding the operator's risk profile is critical to the paper selection decision.
- 5] **Not true. We find the "best" employees in high risk environments are usually at the highest risk for cross contamination.** Best in most business environments means most productive and time spent washing and drying hands is too often perceived as "non productive" even "wasted" time. Disposable paper towels are both the most effective and the fastest method for drying hands. A win-win situation for your "best" employees and your business.
- 6] **Very, very true. University of Arizona research found paper towel levers to be dirty and dangerous contamination sources.** HandwashingForLife® research has found very high levels of dispenser contamination on soap buttons, paper towel levers, faucet handles and exit doors. Hands free dispensers are not only safer but they also encourage more frequent hand washing and sanitizing. User friendly dispensers are a best practice decision in high risk food environments.
- 7] **Yes & no. Automatic faucets and dispensers are becoming popular in "consumer" restrooms for the "statement" they make about the facility.** But, safe-smart operators are also installing them in employee washrooms, facility entry points and work site locations. HandwashingForLife® strongly advocates all "hands-free" dispensers but in-field testing consistently shows the fully automatic dispenser makes hand hygiene easier, safer and friendlier. In most situations they also lower the total cost of hand hygiene through better control of product usage.

## Hand Drying

### Myth:

Any paper towel will do.

Air dryers are cheap and eco friendly.

Reusable cloth towels are a good substitute.

Cheap towels are good enough.

Hand drying time isn't important.

Buttons and levers on dispensers get contaminated.

Automatic dispensers are just for "show."