

Preventing H1N1 This Flu Season

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As the global H1N1 pandemic spreads, Pineapple Hospitality offers CleanWell all-natural hand sanitizers and ZAPLEX disposable TV remote covers to help keep your guests healthy and happy.

This past summer, when news continued to spread about the threat of the H1N1 virus - aka the swine flu - management at the Q Hotel & Spa in Kansas City, Mo., wanted to do something to keep guests and employees healthy and safe. But as a 'green lodging property,' the Q Hotel & Spa didn't want to resort to using toxic chemicals or harsh alcohol-based cleaning products.

With the help of Pineapple Hospitality, the premier distributor of Green Hotel Products and Marketing Programs for the Hospitality Industry, the Q Hotel & Spa found a solution: CleanWell all-natural hand sanitizer.

'Because of the threat from H1N1, we knew we had to do something to protect our guests and employees from getting sick,' says Debbie James, Head of Housekeeping for the Q Hotel & Spa.

'We were extra vigilant about our sanitation, wiping things down and cleaning things off. But you just can't keep up with everything, be everywhere at once,' James adds. 'So we focused on our most-trafficked areas, and came up with a solution that provided the extra protection from the flu, and was still free of chemicals, the way our socially responsible travelers here at the Q expect.

CleanWell dispensers were hung in several of the hotel's public areas, such as the entrances to its omelette bar and computer room/business center. Because frequent handwashing/sanitizing is the No. 1 suggested step in reducing the risk of contracting the H1N1 virus and other communicable diseases, The Q Hotel & Spa's guests have absolutely appreciated the steps the hotel has taken to offer this added precaution.

'Being a green hotel and able to offer this added level of protection to our guest and staff, CleanWell has been a perfect fit for us,' she adds.

'The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the H1N1 flu a pandemic that has spread to more than 70 countries, and every state in the U.S.,' says Ray Burger, President of Pineapple Hospitality. 'Though we haven't seen any major outbreaks of H1N1 at hotels yet, it is essential the hospitality industry address concerns and provide a safe, healthy environment for guests and staff alike - particularly as we enter flu season.'

Pineapple Hospitality offers a number of solutions that offer protection from the transmission of germs between guests, including CleanWell all-natural hand sanitizer and ZAPLEX disposable TV remote control covers.



Zaplex: Protection proven by Doc Oz

Recently, Dr. Mehmet Oz - the popular syndicated talk-show host who has appeared on Oprah,

Larry King and CNN - offered a number of tips to help prevent and contain the spread of the H1N1 flu. He mentioned vaccinations, hand-washing, taking Vitamin D, staying hydrated, staying fit, not smoking and even eating fruits and vegetables to limit your risks of contracting the flu. He also specifically demonstrated how ZAPLEX disposable TV remote control covers are a great way to avoid the spread of germs in hotel rooms and hospitals.

On his Web site, www.doctoroz.com, Dr. Oz writes, 'A study found that one of the most germ-infested things in a hospital room is - would you believe it? - the TV remote control. When tested, the TV remotes had more than three times as much bacteria as the hospital room doorknobs, the nurse call button, and the tray table - and many of those bugs were lethal killers. And you thought the TV could just bore you to death.'

Pineapple Hospitality's ZAPLEX disposable TV remote control protectors are injected with an antibacterial compound proven to help hotels avoid the all-too-common hand-to-remote transferring of colds, flus and MRSA's. The clean, clear and easy-to-use ZAPLEX also protects remote controls from spills and grime, and saves batteries and their compartment covers from falling out and getting lost.

ZAPLEX covers are made to conform to almost any size remote control, and easily can be switched out by housekeeping after each guest checks out. They offer a high level of protection and a high value to your guests at a low price. ZAPLEX covers also can be sold at hotels' front counters and gift shops individually to guests - providing an extra service and revenue source that makes you stand out among the competition.

'ZAPLEX covers tell your guests you are serious about their health and safety, and provides them ease-of-mind - particularly at times like these when H1N1 is so prevalent in the media,' Burger says. 'We don't want to scare our guests. But because the remote control is often the first, last and most touched object in any hotel room, they'll certainly notice the extra steps you've taken to protect them against the spread of germs and disease.'



CleanWell

CleanWell is an all-natural, antimicrobial solution - a patented formula of essential plant oils that are proven germ killers.

CleanWell kills 99.9% of germs on contact and has been proven to be just as effective as harsh alcohol-based formulas. It's safe for kids and those with sensitive skin. In fact, the product was born out of a father's quest to use safer germ-killing products around his immunity-compromised son.

'Washing your hands regularly has been proven to cut the rate of infectious disease nearly 50%. It is very important for travelers to be judicious about their hand hygiene when they travel,' says Holly Bornstein, Director of Marketing for CleanWell. 'By providing CleanWell all-natural foaming antibacterial soaps, hotels can deliver a luxurious hand washing experience that is free of triclosan, a potent endocrine disruptor.'

For the growing number of eco-conscious hotels, CleanWell is 100% biodegradable. Since it's plant based, it breaks down completely and doesn't adversely effect the environment. CleanWell also is certified cruelty-free - it is never tested on animals.

Bornstein mentions that CleanWell is a safe and effective product proven in independent laboratory studies to perform as well as alcohol-based products. So you can confidently use CleanWell just as you would an alcohol-based hand sanitizer without drying out your hands and without worrying about its environmental impact.

'At CleanWell we've set out to have a positive impact on public health,' Bornstein says. 'While many people know that hand hygiene is important, often there is low compliance because people don't enjoy the hand washing or sanitizing experience. We've looked at every aspect of the experience from the hand sanitizer delivery system to the look of the product to how your hands feel afterward. If your hands become cracked after you clean them, you're not going to want to do that again. Cleanwell creates a better experience all around, which translates into more compliance and wellness.'

H1N1 Action Plan

The American Hotel & Lodging Association recently released a manual designed for hotels on how to handle H1N1 flu risks during this flu season. Its tips to protecting yourself and others against H1N1 include:

Stay informed. Health officials will provide additional information as it becomes available. Visit the U.S. government's central H1N1 Website at www.flu.gov.

Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective. Frequent handwashing is a proven way to prevent infection. CDC recommends that when you wash your hands - with soap and warm water - that you wash for 15 to 20 seconds. (Note: The Centers for Disease Control has said some non-alcohol based sanitizers like CleanWell are as effective at killing germs and preventing the spread of illness.)

Carry an alcohol-based hand gel containing at least 60% alcohol. Use it when you don't have access to soap and water. Alcohol gels kill most germs and are safe for children.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Germs spread this way into your body.

Cough or sneeze into a tissue. Then throw the tissue away and wash your hands. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow.

At home and work, clean phones, computer keyboards, and other surfaces you use often with disinfectant wipes.

If possible, avoid close contact with others, especially if H1N1 cases have been identified in the area where you live.

Don't share food, utensils, drinking glasses, or a toothbrush with others.

Ask your doctor whether others in your household should receive antiviral medication to help them avoid infection.

Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds, and other social distancing measures.

If you are sick with a flu-like illness, stay home until at least 24 hours after you are free of fever or free from signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.

Note: A fever is classed as a temperature of 100° F (37.8°C) or higher. Stay isolated in your home except to seek medical care or for other necessities. Think of others. Remember, you would want sick people to stay home to protect your own health.

The AH&LA stresses hotels should develop response plans and strategies to deal with H1N1 flu this season. The plans should answer the following questions: What should you discuss and plan for if an H1N1 pandemic wave appears in your area? How will this affect your business, employees, guests, suppliers, and public health first responders?

The plans also should help you develop a method for determining when to send employees home, as well as procedures for handling the tasks normally done by workers who have become ill. Any plan must include accurate lists of key agencies that should be contacted if a guest or employee is suspected of having H1N1 flu, as well as contacts that can provide your business accurate and timely local information. A complete list of state public health contacts can be found at www.pandemicflu.gov.

Be sure to train and educate employees to recognize symptoms among each other and guests, and provide definitive procedures for reporting suspected illness to management.

More information is available at www.ahla.com/flu.

Common Hotel Areas for Decontamination

According to the AH&LA, these areas in a hotel should receive heightened sanitizing attention during this period:

Cleaning buckets

Back-of-the-house areas

Beverage service items, such as coffee and tea pot handles

Business centers

Chairs

Cleaning equipment

Countertops, particularly at front and concierge desks

Desks

Door handles and security latches

Dresser and table drawer handles

Elevator buttons

Exercise equipment in fitness rooms

Faucet handles

Food-serving scoops and spoons

Guestrooms in general

Ice machines

In-room information resources

Light switches

Menus

On-site restaurants

Pens at front and concierge desks

Public areas in general

Public computers

Public restrooms

Public telephones

Push plates on swing doors

Refrigerator handles

Room keys

Soap dispenser handles

Stair railings

Stall door handles

Tables

Telephone and computer keypads and PC 'mice'

Temperature-control switches

Toilet handles

Tool handles

Towel dispenser handles

Trash receptacles

TV remote control buttons

The lobby in general

About Pineapple Hospitality

Headquartered in Saint Charles, Missouri, Pineapple Hospitality(TM) is an EPA ENERGY STAR(TM) partner bringing fresh ideas to hospitality guests' doors and owner/operators' bottom lines - including FreshStay(R) (www.freshstay.com), EcoRooms & EcoSuites (www.EcoRooms.com) Environmentally Sensitive Amenities(TM), EO(R), Neutrogena(R), Earth Perfect and greenSPA(TM) amenities, AVIVA and WAVE dispensers, Energy Efficient Lighting and Controls, Custom Linen & Towel Re-Use Programs, Green Key Cards, Green Earth Key Cards, Energy Management Systems and Controls, High Performance showerheads, the Nature's Mist(TM) deodorization system, Zero Odor, and dozens of other products and programs. For more information, please visit www.pineapplehospitality.net, or call us at 636-922-2285.

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