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CORONAVIRUS – COVID-19 – 2019-NCOV

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1 Foreword

The UEPG Health and Safety Committee has produced this *UEPG Guidance for COVID-19 management in the European aggregates industry* to support Members with a specific tool adapted to the characteristics of an aggregates extraction site.

The European Commission document *COVID-19: Back to the workplace. Adapting workplaces and protecting workers* has been used as a basis for this guidance to try to avoid any discrepancy with the official European recommendations.

However, this UEPG document does not replace official recommendations in any European country or stricter limits and preventive measures that can be promoted by governments.

The COVID-19 crisis is putting pressure on employers and workers. Appropriate preventive measures help to achieve a safe and healthy return to work and contribute to stopping the transmission of COVID-19.

This document will be updated, if necessary, in accordance with the new recommendations of the European health authorities.

These recommendations must require specific adaptation to the specific conditions of the aggregates site or treatment plant and to the national recommendations.

Each company may adopt the strictest instructions it considers, depending on its own circumstances.

2 Introduction

Following the novel coronavirus (COVID-2019) pandemic, most of the Member States of the European Union (EU) have put in place a number of measures, including those affecting workplaces, to fight the spread of the disease. The world of work is severely affected during this crisis, therefore, all sections of society – including businesses, employers and social partners – must play a role in order to protect workers, their families and society at large.

The nature and extent of the restrictions, such as on suspension of non-essential activities, differ between Member States and sectors, but a substantial proportion of workers either have to work from home, or if their work cannot be performed at a distance, they stay at home often under an income replacement arrangement.

Once the physical distancing measures achieve a sufficient reduction in COVID-19 transmission rates, national administrations are authorising a gradual resumption of work activities. This is being done stepwise, with work that is considered essential for health protection and the economy authorised first and work that can be done effectively while working from home last. However, regardless of how and to what extent normal work activities resume, it is highly likely that some measures will remain in place for some time to avoid a steep increase in infection rates ([COVID-19: guidance for the workplace](#)). Furthermore, it is also possible that an increase in infections at some point in the future will require a reintroduction of restrictive measures in some cases.

The COVID-19 crisis is putting pressure on employers and workers, whether they had to implement new procedures and practices in a very short time, or to suspend their work and business activities. Occupational safety and health offers practical support for returning to the workplace: appropriate preventive measures will help to achieve a safe and healthy return to work following relaxation of physical distancing measures, and also contribute to suppressing transmission of COVID-19.

3 About COVID-19

The transmission between humans is considered similar to that described for other coronaviruses, namely through secretions of infected people, mainly by direct contact with respiratory drops of more than 5 microns (capable of transmitting at distances of up to 2 meters) and the hands or fomites contaminated with these secretions followed by contact with the mucosa of the mouth, nose or eyes.

It can also be transmitted by coming into contact with contaminated surfaces or objects. Therefore, measures must be taken to avoid both ways of transmission.

Coronaviruses are a family of viruses that cause infections in humans and a variety of animals, including birds and mammals such as camels, cats, and bats. It is a zoonotic disease, which means that it can be transmitted from animals to man. Human-affecting coronaviruses (HCoV) can produce clinical symptoms ranging from the common cold with a seasonal pattern in winter to more serious ones such as those caused by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) viruses and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV).

The incubation period of the disease has been estimated between 4 and 7 days with an average of 5 days, but based on the knowledge of other Betacoronaviruses, MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV, it could be from 2 to 14 days. So far, the source of infection is unknown and there is uncertainty regarding severity and transmission capacity.

4 General preventive measures in an aggregates quarry

Depending on the nature of the activities and the currently known mechanisms of transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, in an aggregates site, the risk scenario in which workers can be found is that only exceptionally could the contagion occur, due to a very low or zero probability of exposure: workers have limited direct contact (the vast majority on an aggregates site) or, if they have it (as would be the case with weighbridge operators, office workers or security guards), it is produced at a safe distance, (and in this case, collective protective measures can be implemented).

Thus, to avoid the risk of infection with COVID-19, a series of preventive measures should be adopted, which are essential to ensure that the probability of spreading the virus between people is considerably reduced. Therefore, any protective measure adopted must be aimed at adequately protecting each worker from specific risks, either through collective protective measures, or by using personal protective equipment (PPE), together with the adoption of work organisation measures.

Although, whenever possible, companies should be encouraged to carry out the work activity from home, in the case of quarrying operations, this is not possible for the vast majority of jobs. For this reason, a plan for the continuity of work activity should be created or updated in emergencies such as the one in question, in the face of an increase in staff sick leave or in a scenario of increased risk of transmission in the workplace, with a process participation and agreement with the legal representatives of workers.

At the same time, aggregates-producing companies should promote flexible hours and staggered work shifts to reduce concentrations of workers, if necessary.



- Ensure that only workers who are essential to the job are present in the workplace, and minimise the presence of third parties.
- Reduce, as far as possible, physical contact between workers (e.g. during meetings or during breaks), avoiding face-to-face meetings and facilitating, as far as possible, videoconferences.
- Isolate workers who can carry out their tasks alone safely.
- Whenever possible, arrange for them to work alone in a machine/vehicle, spare office, or meeting room.
- If possible, ask vulnerable workers to work from home (older people and those with chronic conditions (including hypertension, lung or heart problems, diabetes, or who are undergoing cancer treatment) and pregnant workers (section 7.5.).
- Workers with close family members who are at high risk may also need to telework.
- Eliminate, and if not possible, limit physical interaction with and between customers. For example, through online or phone orders, contactless delivery or managed entry (while also avoiding crowding outside), and physical distancing both inside and outside the premises (section 7.7.).

The scope of these recommendations includes all workers (own and subcontracted), as well as providers of goods and services that access the sites. Contractors and suppliers of goods and services must submit to the same rules as the rest of the company's workers. Maximum collaboration will be requested from all the people in the organisation for the effective adoption of preventive measures and the follow-up of the recommendations made.

In this sense, the company must analyse the following issues that are covered by these recommendations:

- The need to update the risk assessment (section 5).
- The specific protocol to follow in the event that a worker becomes ill (or has direct contact with a sick person), to protect the health of other workers and maintain activity.
- If there is a high number of cases, necessary conditions to continue the activity.
- Mechanisms for consulting workers without face-to-face meetings.
- Information to be provided to workers and communication procedure. Information must be given to workers about the risks derived from exposure to COVID-19, as well as the preventive measures to be implemented following the company's usual communication procedures. It is recommended to present the information and the preventive measures or protocols to each worker, with a signed acknowledgement of receipt.
- Hygiene and cleaning measures for workers.

- Hygiene and cleaning measures in workstations and common spaces (locker room, toilets, canteen, offices, etc.).
- The management of waste should be done in accordance with the government waste management recommendations, if any.
- Specific preventive measures to be adopted based on existing jobs.

When the company considers it necessary, it will request the support from its protective and preventive services¹ and, in particular, from its occupational health service. The health service of the protective and preventive services should evaluate the existence of vulnerable workers (section 7.5) to infection with SARS-CoV-2 and, consequently, will determine the adoption of additional preventive and protective measures necessary.

In addition, the need to extend these preventive measures to subcontracted entities that operate on site or in the plant is recommended.

5 Update your risk assessment and take appropriate measures

Just as under normal working conditions, the identification and **assessment of risks** in both physical and psychosocial working environments is the starting point for managing occupational safety and health (OSH) under COVID-19 measures.

Employers are obliged to revise their risk assessment when there is a change to the work process and to consider all risks, including those affecting mental health.

When revising the risk assessment, attention should be given to any anomalies or situations that cause problems and to how these can help the organisation become more resilient in the long term.

Remember the importance of involving workers and their representatives in the risk assessment revision and call on your risk prevention or occupational health provider if you have one.

As input to your assessment, obtain up to date information from the public authorities on the prevalence of COVID-19 in your area.

Once the risk assessment is updated, the next step is to make an action plan with appropriate measures. Below are some examples of COVID-19 related issues to consider when drawing up such an action plan.

The implementation of safe work practices to limit exposure to COVID-19 at work requires first assessing the risks, and then implementing the **hierarchy of controls**.

This means putting in place control measures to first eliminate the risk and if this is not possible, minimise workers' exposure.

Start with collective measures first and, if necessary, supplement them with individual measures, such as the use of PPE.

¹ According to Council Directive 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work, Article 7.

6 Sharing information

Given the ways of contagion of COVID-19, sharing information is one of the main means to avoid cases within the company. The information provided by the company should include everything that has been issued by the public health authorities of the Member State where the quarry is located.

The following aspects should be communication to workers, but not only:

- The COVID-19 transmission pathways and associated symptoms (section 2).
- The measures for transportation from home to work and back (section 7.6).
- The specific action protocols should be made known to all staff:
 - Workers in direct contact with a infected person or who has been in close contact with a suspected or diagnosed person (section 7.1).
 - Workers with symptoms before going to work (section 7.2).
 - Workers who present symptoms during work (section 7.3).
 - Confirmed cases in the company (section 7.4).
- Continuous information on hygiene measures and precautions to be taken (section 7.8).
- In addition to the aforementioned information, all organisational and preventive measures implemented by the company must be communicated.
- All these information should be made available to all workers by electronic means, as well as through posters and leaflets distributed throughout the extraction site (at least at all entrances of the site, in the offices and in the toilets).
- Place posters that encourage staying home when sick and indications on how to cough, sneeze and do a proper hand hygiene at the entrances and in other areas where they can be seen.

7 General operating instructions for all jobs in an aggregates quarry

7.1 Workers in direct contact with an infected person or who has been in close contact with a suspected or diagnosed case

- When a worker has had direct contact with a person confirmed or suspected of COVID-19 or if they have had close contact with such a person, even if he doesn't have the disease symptoms, **IT IS MANDATORY NOT TO GO TO WORK AND IMMEDIATELY COMMUNICATE THIS TO THE COMPANY.** The company, with its occupational health services, should assess the situation and decide the measures to be adopted.
- It is considered "close contact" when the contact has been at a distance of less than 2 meters from a probable or confirmed case for a continuous period of at least 15 minutes (this definition may vary between Member States and depend on health authorities) (e.g. visits, meetings, business trips, etc.) or the same vehicle has been shared.
- In the event of casual contact with any possible, probable or confirmed case of COVID-19, normal work activity can be continued and passive surveillance carried out in order to control the appearance of symptoms and take extreme measures of personal hygiene.

7.2 Workers with symptoms before going to work

- IT IS MANDATORY NOT TO GO TO WORK AND IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY THE COMPANY, if the following SYMPTOMS appear: fever (more than 37.5 ° C) or other flu-like symptoms such as runny nose, sneezing, dry cough, pain from throat, severe headache, diarrhea, muscle pain or tiredness.

In case the worker presents these symptoms, it is highly recommended to inform the company as soon as possible, using the usual procedure, in order to alert the workers with whom he has been in contact, so that appropriate preventive measures can be taken.

- In this case, it is recommended to announce the general practitioner and/or public health authorities, as well as the company occupational health services, if available. In order to receive indications regarding treatment and procedures to follow, please consult relevant public health authorities and respect the measure of self-isolation at home for 14 days (unless otherwise indicated by specialists).
- If, in addition to some of these symptoms, there is difficulty in breathing (dyspnea), public health authorities should be called without delay.
- As soon as the disease is confirmed, it is highly recommended for the worker to inform the company as soon as possible.

7.3 Workers who present symptoms during work

- All aggregates sites should have a space for the isolation of workers who may present severe symptoms during their work day, until their evacuation is organised in accordance with instructions of the public health authorities. Any space can be taken into consideration, but it is necessary to have it planned so as not to have to improvise.

Thus:

- When a worker presents the symptoms mentioned above in the workplace, in particular: fever, cough, respiratory difficulties, he must immediately report it to the management. A mask should be put on immediately, a distance of at least 2 meters² should be maintained with the rest of the people and he should be transferred to the isolation room. The company's occupational health service and/or the public health authorities must be contacted, and the company management and the worker should follow the instructions received.
- After analysing the situation of the worker, according to specific instructions, the company should decide whether they should be referred to the public health services so that they can assess the case, according to the legal recommendations in the Member State, and the steps to follow with their contacts.
- The work area and the areas occupied by the worker must be cleaned and disinfected.
- Workers who have maintained close contact with the affected person should maintain their usual activity, while actively monitoring their health status and it is recommended to limit their social interactions.
- As soon as the disease is confirmed, it is highly recommended for the worker to inform the company as soon as possible.

² 2 meters is the recommendation of EU OSHA and a number of EU Member States. Nevertheless, please verify what is the recommended safe distance in your own country and adapt these recommendations to your national indications.

7.4 Procedure in case of a confirmed COVID-19 case in the company

- The company must prepare a specific protocol in case a worker is confirmed with COVID-19.
- Basically, it is the two situations described at points 7.2 and 7.3, with the measures that should be adopted.
- The company must identify the internal contacts of the affected worker, and a description of the situation and measures to be adopted is found in section 7.1.
- In addition, all relevant medical bodies related to the company, such as the occupational health service of the company, and the management have to be notified, so that, depending on the job position occupied by the infected worker, the appropriate measures can be adopted.
- The legal representatives of workers, the subcontractors and the self-employed who have been on site in the last 15 days should also be notified.
- The work area, the equipment used and the areas used by the worker must be cleaned and disinfected.

7.5 Vulnerable workers

- According to indications from the public health authorities, it is the responsibility of the protective and preventive services to determine which workers belong to a particularly vulnerable group for COVID-19.
- A vulnerable group is considered to be any worker with previous and chronic illnesses or a pregnancy, which may increase their susceptibility to COVID-19 infection.
- Workers in the following situations or conditions are considered vulnerable to COVID-19: over 60 years, chronic lungs (asthma, chronic bronchitis, etc.) or heart conditions, high blood pressure, diabetes, immune disorders, kidney problems or cirrhosis, undergoing active chemotherapy or taking immunosuppressant. Pregnant women or women who are breastfeeding are also a vulnerable group. These people should notify the company management, so that appropriate protection measures can be adopted for each case.
- The presence of vulnerable workers in the workplace should be limited as far as possible by prioritising teleworking or other flexibility measures. If not possible, the vulnerable worker should maintain a minimum safety distance from the rest of the workers, use separation screens or appropriate PPE. Please follow the specific recommendations of public health authorities.

7.6 Travel between home and work

- The use of individual transportation means is recommended.
- If the workers walk to work, or use a bicycle or motorcycle, it is no need to wear a mask. Social distancing should be maintained while walking on the street.
- High risk transportation means, such as metro, buses and other elements of public transport, and, in general, any space prone to crowding should be avoided as much as possible. It is recommended to use a hygienic, non-medical mask while on public transport.
- When, for strict reasons of necessity, the same vehicle is shared, to guarantee safety distances, only one person may travel for each row of seats, maintaining the greatest possible distance (diagonally) between the occupants. To the extent possible, workers should always occupy the same place.
 - In a 4-5 seats vehicle, maximum 2 people should travel.

- In vehicles with up to 9 seats (including the driver) that have three rows, maximum 3 people should travel.

These indications may differ from country to country, if differently, please follow national recommendations.

7.7 Management of entrances and exits in the workplace, access control and reception/shipment of cargo

- Measures should be taken to ensure that only authorised workers are allowed to enter a site and various information means (e.g. posters, stickers, etc.) should be created to guarantee that all those who do access a site know and take the appropriate preventive measures to avoid infections.
- It is recommended for workers to take their temperature before leaving for work and, in the event that it exceeds 37.5°C, proceed as indicated in section 7.2.
- Ensure the safety distance at the entrances of sites, avoiding crowds, respecting the following measures:
 - Staggered and shift entry into work areas in order to avoid crowds.
 - At the entrances/exits/access points to common areas, signposts should be established to guarantee the minimum safety distance between people. If, due to space limitations, this is not possible, employees should wear a mask.
 - If possible, dedicate an entrance and an exit to the premises with adequate hand cleaning means.
 - If possible, doors should be left open to avoid the need to push/pull them.
- Eliminate or minimise the presence of persons from outside the company, while maintaining all necessary precautions for this situation.
- Specific procedures should be carried out for the access of external providers, in order to reduce contacts with the staff on site. These procedures should include entry, exit and transit routes, as well as the procedure for loading and unloading goods (see preventive measures section).
- The best method is to ensure the delivery of goods through pick-up or delivery points outside the premises. Delivery workers should be advised on hygiene measures in their cab and provided with appropriate disinfectants. They must be allowed to use facilities such as toilets, albeit with the appropriate precautions (such as allowing only one user at a time and regular cleaning).
- To the extent possible, delivery workers should be prevented from leaving their vehicle.
- If possible, dedicated toilets should be located/installed for suppliers and/or other external workers outside the premises, to prevent the use of company toilets. These should be cleaned/disinfected just like the company toilets.



7.8 Hygiene measures

- Personal hygiene measures must be implemented in all work areas.

- The necessary material should be provided so that workers can respect their personal hygiene throughout the day, having for this purpose a personal kit (soap and water or hydro-alcoholic gel, wet wipes, etc.).
- Hand hygiene is the main measure to prevent infections. Workers must wash their hands frequently, for 20 to 60 seconds, thoroughly cleaning them with soap and water or hydro-alcoholic solutions:
 - If the hands are visibly clean, hand hygiene should preferably be done with alcohol-based products.
 - If they are dirty or stained with fluids, it should be done with water and antiseptic soap.
 - For drying hands only mechanical or disposable means should be used.
- When coughing or sneezing, the mouth and nose should be covered with the flexed elbow or with a disposable tissue and thrown away immediately afterwards in a trash container with a lid, if possible, operated with a pedal.
- Anyone with respiratory symptoms should wash their hands frequently because they may accidentally come in contact with secretions or contaminated surfaces.
- Washing hands with soap and water, or with an alcohol-based solution, is appropriate as well and should be done after being in contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects or materials.
- Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose or mouth, with or without gloves, since your hands facilitate transmission.
- Masks help prevent virus transmission if they are worn by people who are sick.
- Even in case a company worker with symptoms has been placed in confinement by public health authorities, the use of masks in the workplace should not be mandatory (unless differently indicated by national authorities in your country). This is because improper or prolonged use can create a feeling of false security that can be counterproductive. Indeed, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control states in its latest document the following:
 - The use of masks can provide a false sense of security that leads to suboptimal physical distance, poor cough etiquette and inadequate hand hygiene, among other negative issues.
 - There is a risk that improper mask removal, handling of a contaminated mask, or an increased tendency to touch the face when healthy workers wear a mask may actually increase the risk of transmission.
 - The use of non-medical masks made from various textiles could be considered, especially in situations of supply problems. Nevertheless, medical masks should be given priority for use as personal protective equipment. This is based on limited indirect evidence supporting the use of non-medical masks as a mean of source control.
 - The use of masks in the community should be considered only as a complementary measure and not as a replacement for established preventive measures, for example, social distancing, cough etiquette, meticulous hand hygiene and avoiding touching the face, nose, eyes and mouth.



- However, the use of masks should be set by the protective and preventive services based on the risk assessment or in accordance with the indications of the public health authorities.

7.9 Preventive measures in common areas

Organisational measures are aimed at maintaining the minimum safety distance between workers, and thus, reduce the possibility of infection.

Preventive measures must be enforced in common work areas:


- Simple posters should be made with visual information and posted in strategic places to remind the main preventive measures.
- A distance of at least 2 meters must be maintained with the rest of the people and workers must avoid speaking directly to people's faces over short distances.
- Shaking hands or hugs should not be used and the social distance already indicated must be maintained.
- In this sense, it is recommended to try to rearrange the orientation of workstations, the organisation of the movement of people and the distribution of spaces, using furniture, partitions, etc.
- Latex or nitrile gloves (depending on allergies) should be available at all times for use, where appropriate, in places of common access, and pay special attention to their removal and disposal.
- In case of using safety work gloves, depending on the risk, latex or nitrile gloves should be used below them.
- Close, or restrict the use of rest areas, canteens and common areas, avoiding crowds.
 - The number of people in working units should be limited and, for this, shifts and special schedules should be established for the use of changing rooms, toilets, canteens or other similar areas, in order to maintain the established safety distance, and thus avoid workers are less than 2 meters away.
 - Ensure there is only one worker at a time in bathrooms and changing rooms (depending on the size of these spaces and the rules applicable in every country, more people could be allowed). Place a sign on the main door indicating when one of the toilets is in use to ensure that only one person at a time enters.
 - The measures for cleaning and disinfecting the showers must be reinforced or, in case this is not possible, they should be temporarily closed.
 - Closed spaces (rooms, offices, common areas, etc.) must be ventilated for at least fifteen minutes a day if there is no risk of dust contamination.
- As far as possible, the work schedule should be adapted to avoid coinciding meal times. It is preferable, if possible, to carry out continuous working hours to avoid that the workers have to eat in the premises provided for this purpose on site.
 - Drinking water is important. If common bottle racks are used, hands should be washed before and after use.
 - It is recommended to prohibit the use of water fountains that require bringing the mouth closer to the tap.
 - It is recommended to eliminate common coffee machines.
 - Cutlery, glasses, plates, etc. should not be shared.

- Drinks or food should not be shared either.

7.10 Cleaning

- The general cleaning of common spaces is mandatory: toilets, changing rooms, canteen, etc., with the appropriate products for their disinfection. Screens, doors, surfaces, knobs and other surfaces susceptible to contact with hands should also be cleaned.

One of the main priorities is the thorough disinfection of toilets.

- Bleach and ammonia are two essential basic elements that serve as disinfectants. Bleach is recommended for all areas such as toilets, taps, sinks, radiators and other contact surfaces. Cleaning can be done with the usual detergent and disinfection with sodium hypochlorite solution (commercial bleach) with a concentration of 20-30 ml per litre of water, 62-71% ethanol, 0.5% hydrogen peroxide and/or other authorised virucidals, which have been demonstrated effective against coronaviruses.
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- Empty surfaces to facilitate regular cleaning.
 - Ensure disinfection at least once a day.
 - Floor maintenance: it is recommended to use wet washing-disinfection with the following specifications:
 - Floors and surfaces should be cleaned with a disposable washing mop soaked in detergent.
 - The floors and surfaces should then be rinsed with tap water and another disposable washing mop.
 - Leave sufficient drying time for all surfaces.
 - Floors and surfaces should be disinfected with bleach diluted with a single-use washing mop, different from the previous two.
 - In any case, proper protection of the cleaning staff must be ensured. All tasks should be carried out with single-use clothes, a mask and single-use gloves. For cleaning tasks, it is recommended to use vinyl/acrylonitrile gloves. In case of using latex gloves, it is recommended to use it on a cotton glove.
 - Napkins, papers, gloves, and other contaminated waste should be removed with caution, and trash bags should be closed tightly.
 - Periodic ventilation must be carried out in all facilities, at least daily and for more than five minutes, if there is no risk of dust contamination. If possible, all areas should be ventilated after cleaning.
 - It is recommended to renew air filters and increase the ventilation level of the air conditioning systems to renew the air more regularly.
 - Soap dispensers, disinfectant gel, disposable paper, etc. should be checked at least daily, repairing or replacing those that have faults. It is recommended to have a record of these actions. The frequency of toilet cleanings should also be monitored.

- Waste management should be done in accordance with all precautions taken and with the recommendations issued by the authorities, if any.
 - All personal hygiene materials (masks, latex or nitrile gloves, etc.) must be deposited in the trash according to the national legislation.
 - In case a worker presents symptoms while at work, it is necessary to isolate the garbage bag where he has thrown napkins or other used products. This garbage bag should be removed and placed in a second garbage bag, which must be closed.
- In case of shift work:
 - Disinfection of work units should be done, if possible, between shifts. When disinfection of workplaces is not possible, workers must have protective gloves, in accordance with the UNE-EN ISO 374.5:2016 standard.
 - When a transport vehicle is shared by several workers, disinfection of the interiors and knobs are necessary, at least once a day. Collective transport vehicles (workers' cars, vans, etc.) should be disinfected whenever possible, after each use, or at least once a day. Unless technically impossible, the company should make any provision to maintain the safe distance between the driver and passengers (one per row, seated diagonally from the driver).
- Preventive measures should be reinforced for shared materials:
 - At each shift change, shared objects should be cleaned: tables, counters, computer screens, keyboards, mouse, microwaves, etc.,
 - After use, it should be compulsory to clean the tables or the designated working spaces with disinfectants made available.
 - Cleaning kits should be provided: disinfectant, wet wipes and gloves.
 - As far as possible, you should avoid sharing items such as mobile phones, pens or other types of personal use supplies.
- If the cleaning of work clothes is carried out in the company, the clothes should be handled as little as possible, gently rolled and taken directly to the laundry or placed in a bag for their transfer. Clothes should be washed at a temperature of at least 60 ° C for at least 30 minutes, or with any other method that ensures proper sanitation.



7.11 General measures at work

- Avoid face-to-face meetings or meetings of several people, where the 2 meters distance between participants cannot be guaranteed.
- Preference should be given to communication via mobile phone, radio station or similar means, whenever possible.
 - The stations/telephones in common use should be cleaned before leaving them in their place or handing them over to another person.
- For the reception of any object, a separate and marked place must be established.

- When necessary, the loads should be disinfected by piece, if possible. For obvious reasons, bulk cargoes must not be disinfected.
- In case the objects delivered are needed immediately, they should not be taken from the established place, unless they are handled with gloves, avoiding any type of contact with the contents, until the packaging or box is discarded along with the gloves.
- As an additional measure, it is advisable that, once the gloves are removed and the content is touched, the established hygienic measures for hand washing are applied.
- Points for hand disinfection should be established in the loading and unloading areas.
- In the maintenance tasks related to the workplace, in case any manual tool or other work tools are used:
 - The individualised use of tools and other work equipment is recommended and should be disinfected immediately afterwards, with the sanitary material or the bleach or ammonia solutions made available. When the use of tools or other equipment is not exclusive to a single worker, they should be disinfected between uses.
 - It is mandatory to wear protective gloves during handling.
 - Special attention must be paid to the removal and the way of eliminating waste that could pose a risk of contagion.
- Specific measures when the minimum safety distance between workers cannot be guaranteed:
 - After analysing shift work options or sequencing of work to avoid activities being carried out at less than 2 meters and in case additional collective protective measures still need to be adopted, the installation of physical barriers such as bulkheads should be considered. Barriers can be purpose-made or improvised using transparent materials (e.g. glass, methacrylate, or, alternatively, flexible plastic walls – generally supplied in rolls), partitions, mobile drawers, or storage units so as not to obstruct the visibility of the workers and that are resistant to impacts. They should be easy to clean and disinfect. They should have, if necessary, elements that make them easily identifiable to avoid the risk of knocks or shocks.

Things that are not solid or have gaps, or create a new risk (e.g. from tripping or falling objects) should be avoided. If a barrier cannot be used, additional space between workers should be created by, for example, ensuring they have at least two empty desks on each side.
 - When it is not possible to apply any of the above-mentioned measures, the workers in these areas should be provided with the following PPE:
 - Respiratory Protection: where the risk assessment requires self-filtering masks against particles, FFP3 or FFP2 masks are recommended. Given the emergency situation, in case of supply difficulties and with the sole purpose of preventing the spread of the virus, masks that correspond to the indications of the public health authorities should be used.
 - Protective gloves, according to EN ISO 374.5:2016 standard.
 - Long-sleeved work clothes.
 - The correct placement of the PPE is essential to avoid possible gaps for biological agents; equally important is to correctly remove the PPE, to avoid contact with contaminated areas and/or dispersion of the contagious particles.
 - Respiratory protective equipment must be removed lastly, after the removal of other components, such as gloves, work clothes, etc.

- Exceptionally, in case of national shortage of PPE, companies should implement alternative measures, in order to prevent the risks of infection for workers, such as the use of unapproved masks, or napkins or other garments that serve as a barrier.

7.12 Preventive measures at the end of the work day

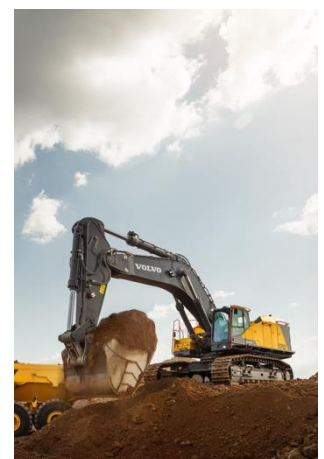
- The worker must, in this order: wash their hands thoroughly, remove work clothes, gloves and mask.
- Work tools should be left clean for the next day.
- Vehicles should be disinfected after each use, especially handles, gear lever, steering wheel, etc., using hydro-alcoholic gel or other disinfectants, according to the instructions of the public health authorities.
- Work clothes and personal protective equipment must be kept clean.
- When you get home:
 - Take off your shoes and leave them near the door;
 - Wash your hands with soap and water;
 - Items that are not needed at home (keys or wallet) should be left in a box at the door;
 - Disinfect other objects used outside (mobile phone or glasses), with wet tissues and alcoholic solutions, or soap and water.
 - Wash clothes using the washing machine on long programs, with hot water and avoiding overloading.

8 Specific operating instructions per job in an aggregates quarry

Below are additional specific instructions for different jobs in quarry operations, which complement the previous general instructions that all workers should comply with:

8.1 Additional preventive instructions for mobile machinery operators and aggregates truck drivers

- As far as possible, you should stop sharing machinery/vehicles among drivers (one machine or vehicle = one driver).
- Otherwise, in case of a shared machinery/vehicle, at each change of driver, ensure that the driver seat and all control elements (buttons, joysticks, steering wheel, windows, dashboard, etc.) are cleaned with disinfectants (bleach or hydro-alcoholic) using gloves.
- Avoid the presence of two people in the same machinery/vehicle. When this is not possible, the operators concerned must wear masks, gloves and covering goggles.
- At the end of the work day, the cabin and the grip points for access (ladders and door knob) of the machinery/vehicle should be cleaned before the shift change, with special emphasis on controls, surfaces and windows.
- For external transport of aggregates:



- When the loading or unloading place is not provided with a water tap, drivers should be provided with hydro-alcoholic gel or an equivalent product.
- You should equip each vehicle with a reserve of water and soap and disposable towels, or hydro-alcoholic gel or equivalent.

8.2 Additional preventive instructions for office workers and weighbridge operators

- You should attempt to organise the office space so that the distance between workstations is as big as possible and at least 2 meters. As far as possible, the position of the workstations should be organised so that there are no workers facing each other.
- Do not share objects without cleaning them before (staplers, scissors, etc.).
- Clean the buttons of the printer before and after use.
- Sanitary gloves should be used to touch commonly used surfaces.
 - If you do not have gloves, it is necessary to wash your hands every time you enter the premises and touch the doors or any other common surfaces.
- For weighbridge operators or other workers that come in contact with third parties and for handling of documents, direct contact should be avoided, and the following indications respected:
 - Promote operating patterns without the need to enter the weighbridge office (e-documents, counter windows or similar, etc.).
 - The installation of a screen as barrier that prevents direct contact is recommended. Another simple option is to pass the documents through the window to be signed and returned. Alternatively, with a lower level of protection, the safe distance could be delimited on the ground.
 - For payments, it is preferable to have card payment instead of cash.
 - In case a screen cannot be used or any of the above-mentioned options, external visitors should not access the offices and the person should be asked to wait for the documents to be signed/issued outside the office.
 - In both cases, a simple poster should be produced and placed in a clearly visible place, outside the offices, with preventive instructions:
 - It is mandatory not to allow the formation of groups of people while waiting, and they should maintain the 2 meters distance between them.
 - They should wait to be called, to avoid the agglomeration inside.
 - If possible, keep the door open to avoid contact with knobs.
 - In the event that they must access the interior of the offices:
 - When accessing, keep a safe distance, even if there is a partition.
 - If necessary and planned, they should use gloves and/or masks, which were made available (organise a simple dispensary), before entering the room and maintaining a safe distance.
 - They should remain in the premises for the minimum time possible.
 - Once outside, they should dump the gloves and the mask, if they had been used, in a covered trash can which must be provided for this purpose, if possible, operated by pedal.

- In both situations, the manipulation of objects by external visitors should be avoided, resorting to some of the following measures:
 - Do not make pens available at the counter or on the table.
 - When returning a delivery, as far as possible, avoid the "second" contact with the delivery note by making available for drivers or the customer a basket in which to deposit the papers.
 - Reduce or limit the handling of documents by moving the printer so that the driver or the customer can take the document himself or have the possibility to take photos, send emails, etc.
- A covered trash can, if possible operated with a pedal should be prepared so that gloves and disposable masks can be dumped, once used.

8.3 Additional preventive instructions for plant/maintenance workers and other operators

- Remind all stakeholders of the social distancing measures when preparing the maintenance operations.
- Everyone should clean their work area (table, keyboard, mouse, screens, control panel, keypads, buttons with which they have come into direct contact, etc.) at the beginning and end of their shift. As far as possible, disinfect tools used collectively and accessories before and after the use.
- The stay in the work area must be limited to one person and, if not possible, the minimum safety distance of 2 meters must be respected. Some improvements that could be considered are: relocation of jobs, postponing some jobs to avoid overlapping in the same space and at the same time, assigning specific hours for each activity and worker by area.
- When social distancing cannot be guaranteed, the operators concerned must:
 - Wear a covering mask, gloves and goggles or follow an appropriate procedure.
- It is mandatory to wash your hands every time you enter the premises or facilities and touch the doors.

8.4 Additional preventive instructions for drilling and blasting workers

- For each drilling, analyse all options allowing to respect social distancing measures, and to limit and/or reduce the number of participants.
- As far as possible, individualise the use of collective tools and accessories (tamper, exploder, scanner, etc.). Otherwise, disinfect them before and after use.

9 Resuming work after a period of closure

If your quarry has been closed for a period of time for reasons related to COVID-19, you should make a plan for when work resumes that takes account of health and safety. You should consider the following in your plan:

- Update your risk assessment as described above and refer to the EU-OSHA COVID-19: guidance for the workplace.
- Carry out adaptations to the layout of the workplace and the organisation of work that should reduce COVID-19 transmission before resuming work fully and before all workers return to the workplace. Consider resuming work in stages to allow adaptations to be carried out. Be sure to inform workers

about the changes and provide them with new procedures and training, if necessary, before they resume work.

- Contact your occupational health service and health and safety advisor if you have access to one and discuss your plan with them.
- Pay special attention to workers who are at high risk and be prepared to protect the most vulnerable, including older people and those with chronic conditions (including hypertension, lung or heart problems, diabetes, or who are undergoing cancer treatment or some other immunosuppression) and pregnant workers. Pay attention also to workers with close family members who are at high risk.
- Consider putting in place support for workers who may be suffering from anxiety or stress. This could range from managers asking workers more often how they are, facilitating exchanges or buddying between colleagues, changes in work organisation and work tasks, to an employee assistance programme or coaching service, as well as offering contact with an occupational health service. Be aware that workers may have gone through traumatic events such as the serious illness or death of a relative or friend, or be experiencing financial difficulties or problems with their personal relationships.
- Workers who are returning to the workplace after a period of isolation, whether as an individual measure or as part of a collective isolation, are likely to have worries, particularly about the risk of infection. These worries – especially if there have been changes to the job – may well result in stress and mental health problems. When physical distancing measures are in place, these problems are not only more likely, but the usual coping mechanisms, such as personal space, or sharing problems with others, are not available (see OSH Wiki Return to work after sick leave due to mental health problems). Provide workers with information on publicly available sources of support and advice. Mental Health Europe has information on how to look after your mental health and cope with the COVID-19 threat.
- Workers might be worried about an increased chance of infection at the workplace and may not want to return. It is important to understand their concerns, provide information about the measures taken and the support available to them.

10 Coping with a high rate of absence

Depending on the infection rates in your local area and the protocols in effect, many of your workers may be absent because of COVID-19. If a worker is in isolation at home as a precaution, they may be able to continue their work remotely (see below), or if this is not the case, the worker will not be able to work for a period.

Workers who are confirmed as having COVID-19 will be absent and unable to work for significantly longer and those who become seriously ill may require a further period of rehabilitation once cured of the infection. In addition, some workers may be absent because they have to take care of a relative.

- The absence of a substantial number of workers, even if only temporary, may cause a strain on continuing activities. While the available workers should be flexible, it is important that they do not find themselves in a situation that will endanger their health or safety. Keep any additional workload as low as possible and ensure that it does not last too long. Line managers have an important role in monitoring the situation and ensuring that individual workers are not overburdened. Respect the rules and agreements on working hours and rest periods and allow the workers the right to disconnect when off work.
- When adapting work to cope with a reduced workforce, for example by putting in place new methods and procedures and changing roles and responsibilities, consider whether staff need additional training

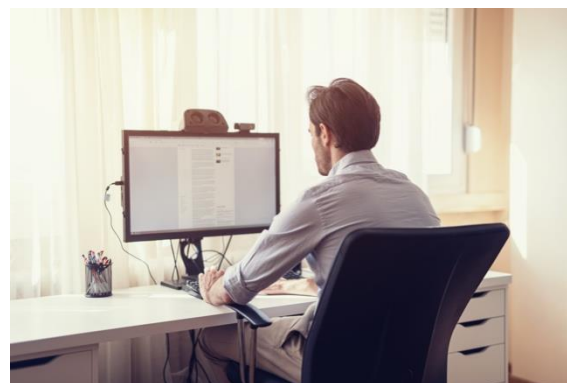
and support, and make sure that all workers are competent to carry out the task they are required to perform.

- Cross-train workers to perform essential functions so the workplace can operate even if key workers are absent.
- If relying on interim staff, it is important to inform them about workplace risks and provide them with training if necessary.

11 Managing workers working from home

As part of the social distancing measures taken in most Member States, workers are encouraged or obliged to work from home if the nature of their job allows it. For most of these workers, it is their first time as ‘teleworkers’ and their working environment is likely to be deficient in many aspects compared to their workplace. The extent to which the home environment can be adapted will vary according to the situation of the worker and the time and resources available for adaptations.

Advice on staying safe and healthy while working from home is available [here](#), but it is largely directed at those who telework regularly or long-term. Below are some suggestions to minimise the risks for workers who have not been able to prepare their home office properly.



- Carry out a risk assessment involving workers who telework and their representatives.
- Allow workers to take home equipment that they use at work on a temporary basis (if they cannot carry it themselves, consider arranging its delivery). This could include items such as computer, monitor, keyboard, mouse, printer, chair, footrest, or lamp. Keep a record of who takes what items to avoid confusion when normal work resumes.
- Provide teleworkers with guidance on setting up a workstation at home that applies good ergonomics, such as good posture and frequent movement, as far as possible.
- Encourage workers to take regular breaks (around every 30 minutes) to stand up, move and stretch.
- Give teleworkers support in the use of IT equipment and software. Tele and video conferencing tools may become essential for work, but may be problematic for workers not used to them.
- Ensure that there is good communication at all levels that includes those working from home. This ranges from the strategic information provided by top-level management to line managers’ duties, without forgetting the importance of routine social interaction among colleagues. While the former can be addressed in scheduled online meetings, the latter can be encouraged through online chats or ‘virtual coffee’ meetings.
- Do not underestimate the risk of workers feeling isolated and under pressure, which in the absence of support can lead to mental health problems. Effective communication and support from the manager and colleagues and being able to maintain informal contact with colleagues is important. Consider having regular staff or team meetings held online or rotate which employees can be present at the workplace, if a gradual return to work has been initiated.
- Be aware that your employee may have a partner who is also teleworking or children who may need care as they are not at school, or who need to connect remotely to continue their schoolwork. Others

may need to care for elderly or chronically ill people and those that are in confinement. In these circumstances, managers will need to be flexible in terms of working hours and productivity of their staff and will need to make the workers aware of their understanding and flexibility.

- Assist workers in setting healthy boundaries between work and free time by communicating clearly when they are expected to be working and available.

12 Involve workers

The participation of workers and their representatives in OSH management is a key to success and a legal obligation. This applies also to measures undertaken at workplaces in relation to COVID-19; a time when events develop quickly, with a high level of uncertainty and anxiety among workers and the population at large.

It is important that you consult your workers and/or their representatives and the occupational health representatives early on about planned changes and how temporary processes will work in practice. Engaging with your workers in assessing risks and developing responses is an important part of good health and safety practice. Health and safety representatives and health and safety committees are in a unique position to help design preventive measures and to ensure that they are implemented successfully.

Consider also how to ensure that agency workers and contractors have access to the same information as direct employees.

13 Take care of workers who have been ill

According to the World Health Organisation, the most **common symptoms** of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Some people become infected but do not develop any symptoms and do not feel unwell. Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment. Around one out of every six people who gets COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficult breathing. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness.

Persons who have become seriously ill may require special consideration even after being declared fit for work. There are some indications that coronavirus patients may suffer from reduced lung capacity following a bout of the disease. Workers in this situation may need their work to be adapted and may need time off to undergo physiotherapy. Workers who have had to spend time in intensive care (IC) may face specific challenges. The worker's doctor and the occupational health service, should advise on the manner and timing of their return to work:

- **Muscle weakness.** This is more serious the longer someone has been in IC. The reduced muscle capacity also manifests itself, for example, in respiratory complaints. Another common but less frequently recognised phenomenon is Post Intensive Care Syndrome (PICS). This happens to an estimated 30 to 50% of people admitted to IC and is comparable to a post-traumatic stress disorder.
- **Problems with memory and concentration.** These complaints often only develop over time. Once someone has started working, this is not always recognised. The symptoms visible at work are memory and concentration problems, difficulty performing the tasks satisfactorily and poorer problem solving skills. It is therefore important to be alert to this if you know that someone has been in IC. Good guidance is very important, because it is difficult for some workers to return to their previous level of performance.

- Long time for resuming work. Data show that a quarter to a third of those who are in IC can develop problems, independent of their age. Approximately half of patients need a year to resume work and up to a third may never return.

Occupational physicians and health services are best placed to advise on how to take care of workers who have been ill and on any adaptations need in their work. If you do not have an occupational health service, it is important to address these issues with sensitivity and to respect workers' privacy and confidentiality.

Be aware of the risk that workers who have been ill with COVID-19 may suffer stigma and discrimination.

14 Plan and learn for the future

It is important to draw up or update crisis contingency plans for shutdown and start-up events in the future, as described in [COVID-19: guidance for the workplace](#). Even small businesses can make a checklist that will help prepare them should any such events occur in the future.

Enterprises that have used teleworking for the first time may consider adopting it as a modern, long-term working practice. The experience gained during the COVID-19 pandemic may feed into developing a teleworking policy and procedures or revising existing ones.

15 Stay well informed & Bibliography

The amount of information related to COVID-19 can be overwhelming and it can be difficult to differentiate the reliable and accurate from the vague and misleading. Always check that the original source of the information is an established and qualified provider. Official sources of information on COVID-19 include:

- Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (2020). Website resources on COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- EU OSHA (2020). Website resources on COVID-19: <https://osha.europa.eu/en/themes/covid-19-resources-workplace>
- European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (2020). Website resources on COVID-19: <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/current-risk-assessment-novel-coronavirus-situation>
- European Commission (2020). Website resources on COVID-19: https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/health/coronavirus-response_en
- OSH WIKI (2020). COVID-19: guidance for the workplace. [https://oshwiki.eu/wiki/COVID-19: guidance for the workplace](https://oshwiki.eu/wiki/COVID-19:_guidance_for_the_workplace)
- World Health Organisation (2020). Website resources on COVID-19: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

When physical distancing measures start to be relaxed, information may be issued that is specific to particular industries, communities, or groups, and it may be updated frequently. In your country, the ministries for health and for labour will have relevant information and may provide links to more specialised sources.

- COMINROC (2020). Protocolo / instrucción de trabajo frente al COVID-19 en explotaciones mineras y en plantas de tratamiento. Spain.

- European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (2020). Infection prevention and control and preparedness for COVID-19 in healthcare settings - second update.
- European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (2020). Using face masks in the community Reducing COVID-19 transmission from potentially asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic people through the use of face masks.
- EU OSHA (2020). COVID-19: Back to the workplace. Adapting workplaces and protecting workers. Belgium.
- Fediex (2020). Recommendations COVID-19. Belgium.
- Health and Safety Executive (2020). HSE eBulletin: Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Latest advice and information for the construction industry.
<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKHSE/bulletins/287058a>
- Irish Concrete Federation (2020). Member guidance on COVID-19. Ireland.
- UNPG (2020). Guide de bonnes pratiques pour assurer la santé et la sécurité des salariés. Recommandations pendant l'épidémie du Coronavirus. France.

ANNEX Informative resources from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control

COVID-19

Disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus



Novel coronavirus

Coronaviruses are viruses that **circulate among animals** but some of them are also known to affect humans.

The 2019 novel coronavirus was identified in China at the end of 2019 and is a new strain that has not previously been **seen in humans**.

Prevention

When visiting affected areas

Avoid contact with sick people



Wash your hands with soap and water



If you develop cough, use a medical face mask



Wherever you travel apply general hygiene rules

Symptoms

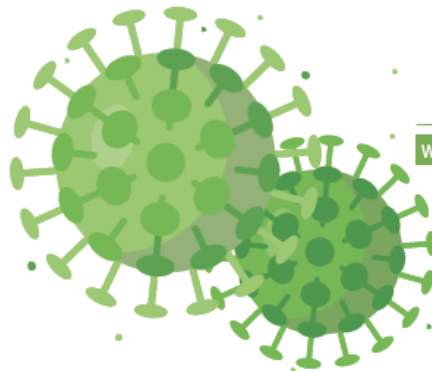
 FEVER

 COUGH

 DIFFICULTY BREATHING

 MUSCLE PAIN

 TIREDNESS



Transmission

VIA RESPIRATORY DROPLETS

2-14 days
estimated incubation period



ecdc.europa.eu/en/novel-coronavirus-china

COVID-19



How to minimise the spread of COVID-19?

Based on the current knowledge of COVID-19 and evidence available on other viral respiratory pathogens.

Simple measures can reduce the spread of the virus.

1 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE MEASURES

Practice proper hand hygiene



Cough and sneeze into your elbow or a tissue. Throw it into a bin and wash your hands



Healthy people **do not** need to wear masks



Masks should be reserved for healthcare workers and those who care for ill persons at home.

2 ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES



Frequently clean used surfaces, clothes and objects



Minimise sharing objects



Ensure appropriate ventilation

3 SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES

Standing 1 metre away from a visibly symptomatic person



Self-isolation of individuals **with symptoms** of a respiratory infection is one of the most important measures for **reducing disease transmission** and limiting the spread of the virus in the community during an epidemic.

For travel advice or travel recommendations refer to official government advice.

ecdc.europa.eu/en/novel-coronavirus-china

Contact tracing is a core public health response to COVID-19. Other measures include active case finding or physical distancing.

In order to trace a contact, we first need to define what a 'contact' is.



A close contact of a COVID-19 case is any person:



who had face-to-face contact with a COVID-19 case within two metres for more than 15 minutes



who was in a closed environment (household, classroom, meeting room, hospital waiting room, etc.) with a COVID-19 case for more than 15 minutes



who had physical contact with a COVID-19 case



who was in an airplane within two seats of a COVID-19 case or people who were in close contact with the case during the flight; if the case showed strong symptoms or moved around the airplane, all passengers may be 'close contacts'



who had unprotected direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (for example by being coughed on)



who was providing care to a COVID-19 case, or laboratory workers who were handling specimens from a COVID-19 case without proper personal protective equipment or with a possible breach of such equipment.

Effective hand-washing

Duration of the procedure: at least 20 seconds



1 Wet hands with water



2 Apply plenty of soap



3 Rub your hands together, palm to palm



4 Rub the back of each hand with the palm of the other hand, with fingers interlaced



5 Rub palm to palm with fingers interlaced



6 Rub with the backs of fingers to opposing palms, with fingers interlaced



7 Rub each thumb clasped in the opposite hand using a rotational movement



8 Rub the tips of the fingers in the opposite palm using a circular motion



9 Rinse your hands well with water



10 Dry your hands thoroughly with a single-use towel



11 Keep the towel in your hand and use it to turn off the tap



Your hands are now
clean and safe!