



IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Hotels Urged to Handle Linen with Extra Precautions, Wash Linens Daily

ALEXANDRIA, Va., May 18, 2020--State and local officials are TRSA's initial targets in its latest campaign to control COVID-19's spread by promoting responsible linen, uniform and facility services practices. Governors, mayors and city managers have been urged by TRSA to guide hoteliers to clean all textiles daily and handle their linen under OSHA universal precautions, among other tactics to ensure guest safety and confidence.

These guidelines were sent to the National Association of Governors, U.S. Conference of Mayors and International City/County Management Association. All are expected to play a role in writing safety guidance documents for the nation's hotels. TRSA's recommendations cover practices for textile use, including washing and handling linens and uniforms, housekeeping and otherwise protecting guests and employees. These provisions extend the StaySafe cleaning standards of the American Hotel & Lodging Association released May 4.

In calling for hotels' adoption of OSHA universal precautions, TRSA notes the importance of these guidelines' directive that soiled textile handlers must presume all linens, uniforms, garments and other textiles are contaminated. These precautions indicate the need for providing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for housekeeping and laundry staff and others.

TRSA's recommendation to clean all textiles daily—bed linens, towels and other items used by patrons or staff—permits lower wash temperatures but calls for greater frequency as an adjunct to StaySafe's call for the highest wash temperatures possible without a frequency requirement. The TRSA provision is consistent with TRSA research that shows guests believe hotels are motivated to adopt linen conservation programs (washing less often than daily) mostly to control costs.

Management practices in the TRSA guidance are intended to ensure guests and employees remain safe and comfortable by raising lodging facility cleanliness standards, said TRSA President and CEO Joseph Ricci. In addition to universal precautions and daily textile washing, he called for at least the following practices to be included in any guidance for the hotel industry and every such facility's safety plan:

- Staff should be given hygienically cleaned, commercially laundered uniforms and garments including front-of-the-house and back-of-the house employees, as well as any food service staff, to wear throughout their shift.
 - Research verifies the superior cleanliness and public preference for professional laundering of workwear. They should not be washed at home. Instead, they should be left at the hotel to be picked up and commercially laundered. A clean uniform or garment should be given out at the start of each employee's shift, replacing the clothes in which they commuted to the hotel.

- Hygienically cleaned tablecloths, placemats and napkins should be used in hotel restaurants to reduce or eliminate disease transmission by touch. Replacing tablecloths between seating ensures a clean and safe table.
 - Studies have shown tables with tablecloths are at least 5 times cleaner than tables left bare.
 - These products can also identify the tables to be used for social separation. Placemats can accomplish a similar result by seating guests further apart at the same table or counter. Hygienically Clean Hospitality certification standards minimize contamination risk.
- If possible, do not shake soiled linen. This will minimize the possibility of dispersing the virus through the air.
- Carts and vehicles used to carry both soiled and clean linen must be properly sanitized after unloading and before reloading with cleaned goods. Clean linen must be properly covered during transport.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers should be placed throughout the hotel for guests and staff to use.
- Reusable face masks that meet CDC guidelines and disposable gloves should be worn by staff. Gloves should be replaced often throughout an employee's shift.
- Commercial cleaning solutions should be used on all hard surfaces throughout the day, including entryway door handles, kitchen area and bathrooms.
- All surfaces within the laundry, including the floors, should be cleaned daily, or more often if they become soiled. Daily cleaning of linen folding tables is also recommended. Using an approved disinfectant is also recommended.

"As America starts to get back to business and dining establishments begin to reopen, providing the public with clean and safe dining establishments will be a key part of an economic recovery. Teaching and requiring the hospitality industry to abide by these steps should be a cornerstone of this process," Ricci said.

About TRSA

TRSA (www.trsa.org), based in Alexandria, VA, represents the nearly \$40-billion linen, uniform and facility services industry. Employing more than 180,000 people at over 1,500 facilities in North America, our industry supplies, launders and maintains linens, uniforms, towels, mats and other products. These help businesses (including retailers, manufacturers, healthcare facilities and restaurants), government and other organizations enhance their image and provide clean, safe environments for their employees and customers. Most Americans benefit at least once per week from the hygiene and safety of products provided to the industry's customers. TRSA verifies and quantifies our industry's commitment to sustainability and cleanliness through our Clean Green and Hygienically Clean certification programs. TRSA increases the industry's productivity, sustainability, safety and professionalism through education, research, benchmarking and information-sharing.