

COVID-19 HVAC Guidance

Ventilation System Start-up

Businesses must evaluate the operational capacity and increase, improve, and maintain ventilation provided throughout the building.

- Increase the outdoor air-percentage to increase dilution of contaminants, and eliminate recirculating (whenever possible) while maintaining indoor air conditions.
- For heating-ventilation-air-conditioning systems that recirculate air, businesses need to improve central-air filtration to at least the MERV-13 or the highest compatible with the filter rack (at least MERV-14 preferred), and seal the edges of filters to further limit bypass around the filters.
- Replace and upgrade air filters prior to re-occupancy.
- Run systems on full economizer as outside air-conditions allow.
- Consult an HVAC professional to ensure proper ventilation is maintained.

Day-To-Day Operations

Once systems are in a safe operational status, businesses should ensure the following practices and protocols are maintained:

- Continuously maximize fresh air into the workplace and eliminate air recirculation.
- Maintain relative humidity levels of RH 40-60%.
- Keep systems running longer hours (24/7 if possible) to enhance the ability to filter contaminants out of the air.
- Add a flush cycle to the controls of the HVAC system, and run HVAC systems for 2 hours before and after occupancy.
- Check and rebalance the HVAC system to provide negative air-pressure whenever possible.
- Supplement ventilation system with the use of portable HEPA filter units whenever possible.
- Minimize air-flow from blowing across people.
- Consult an HVAC professional or the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers to ensure proper ventilation is provided, and ventilation-systems are properly maintained. See ASHRAE's COVID-19 Preparedness Resources (www.ashrae.org/technical-resources/resources).

Information is based on guidance from the State of Minnesota. The original content can be found at:

https://mn.gov/deed/assets/restaurant-bar-industry-guidance-ACC_tcm1045-432897.pdf

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