

Safety Alert



SUBJECT: Desktop/portable/ceiling fans

RECIPIENTS: All Council Services

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Support for desktop and ceiling fans has oscillated over the past few months.

Concerns have been voiced of the potential risk that desktop fans present the risk of recirculating dead air and potential contaminants around the upper body, often (in the case of desktop fans in particular) close to a user's face. Given that potential contaminants could include bacteriological agents and viruses, this has quite naturally raised the question during this time as to whether or not desktop and ceiling fans may contribute to the transmission of Covid-19.

However, recently-published guidance from CIBSE (Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers) supports the view that recirculation of air within a single room, where this is complemented by an outside air supply such as an open window or door, can help to provide fresh air to the room's occupants and is acceptable. [Source: *CIBSE Covid-19 Ventilation Guidance*]

The HSE has adapted its guidance to reflect this view, including their statement that the risk of transmission of Covid-19 by desktop and ceiling fans is low. When risk assessing your workspace, bear in mind that the judicious use of desktop and ceiling fans, in conjunction with a fresh air supply, can help prevent pockets of stagnant air in occupied spaces, and can make a work environment more comfortable. [Source: *HSE Air Conditioning and Ventilation during the Coronavirus outbreak.*]

Useful links / further information:

- [LCC's Managers Health & Safety Toolkit Covid-19](#)
- [CIBSE COVID-19 Ventilation Guidance](#)
- [HSE Air conditioning and ventilation during the Coronavirus outbreak](#)

For further advice and guidance, please contact the Corporate Health & Safety team:
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