PHILLIPS

TECH TIPS

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Combatting COVID-19 While On The Road

Disclaimer: This article does not provide medical advice. It is intended for informational purposes only. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Never ignore professional medical advice in seeking treatment because of something you have read in this article. If you think you may have a medical emergency, immediately call your doctor or dial 911.

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has created a widespread pandemic due to the ease of spread and the severity of the symptoms, already claiming thousands of lives. The virus is transmitted through droplets that are typically expelled when a person who is sick coughs or sneezes. These droplets can be inhaled while still in the air, or make their way to the mouth, nose or eyes when one touches the surfaces that these droplets have landed on and then touches their face. Since this virus is so new, the only way to control it is by reducing the spread with social distancing, hand washing, and sanitizing surfaces, especially those that are touched frequently.

As a driver on the road, far from home and family, it can be scary trying to stay healthy while easing the anxiety of what happens if this virus is caught while on the job. But some steps can be taken to protect one's self.

Social Distancing

- Keep a safe distance of 6 feet from others
- Stay in the vehicle as much as possible
- Move to electronic receipts where possible

Disinfecting Touch Points and Handwashing

- Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with warm water and soap after sneezing, coughing, or touching surfaces that could be contaminated. If possible, keep hand soap and a water jug on board, just for this purpose. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Use paper towels/tissues or wear gloves for commonly touched surfaces such as door handles, or when fueling up. If these are not available, do not touch your face until you have thoroughly washed your hands.
- Wipe down the inside of the tractor frequently with a disinfectant, as well as areas on the outside of the vehicle that are touched often. Wipe down items such as cell phones, or even credit/debit cards that can be a source of cross-contamination after use.

Face Protection

- Wear a mask when leaving the tractor or interacting with others.
- There isn't a need to wear a mask while inside the tractor and driving.
- If safety glasses or goggles are available, wear those when interacting with others. Remember to disinfect them after each use.

Personal Preparedness

- Meal prep and stock up on groceries when possible to avoid frequent stops, especially bottled water.
- Where possible always try to keep the fuel tank half-way filled in case of an emergency.
- Keep a two week's supply of OTC pain, cough, and stomach medications on board as well as a thermometer and pulse oximeter. Keep pen and paper handy to record medication intake and temperature and oxygen level readings.
- Have medical history and insurance info, personal/work and PCP contact info, and any other instructions readily available for emergency medical personnel.
- Know an employer's company guidelines for extended sick-leave and know who to contact if you do get sick.

If You Do Get Sick

- If you are already home when you get sick, stay home.
- When possible, avoid quarantining in your vehicle. Some medical professionals have advised against it because there is no plumbing.
- If you think you have COVID-19, call your doctor or use telemedicine for further direction and clarification on how to handle this while out on the road, especially if you have an underlying condition that makes you more vulnerable.

For further information on how to protect yourself from COVID-19, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website:
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html

TIPS

- On average, we can touch our face up to16 times or more in one hour, increasing the odds of hand contamination between washings. Be mindful of keeping hands away from the face and be diligent in handwashing and using hand sanitizers.
- Personal preparedness, such as stocking up on groceries, OTC medications, and having a plan in place can ease some of the anxieties that come with the changes and precautions occurring in the world today from COVID-19.

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