

# Protect your customers

Industrial-strength wipes need to be powerful enough to clean well, but they must also protect your hands, says **Nigel Dibbo**, managing director of Big Wipes

For heating and plumbing engineers, your hands are your livelihood, so cleaning them effectively while still being able to care for them is crucial, as skin disease on the hands can be debilitating and has serious implications when trying to continue with work. After all, your skin is your body's largest organ and its protective barrier.

If you work in a manual trade and your hands are irritated then the barrier can be broken, harmful substances can accumulate and cause sore and inflamed skin, affecting long-term health.

There are common signs of skin problems to look for on your hands such as dryness, redness, cracking or swelling of the hands and fingers, as well as blisters, flaking and itching. Workers can develop these symptoms as they come into direct contact with substances commonly used on-site. If you are immersing your hands in liquids, or getting them splashed on a regular basis, then your hands may suffer.

It can also be difficult for tradespeople to avoid contact with dirt and potentially harmful substances. Washing your hands is the most obvious way to get rid of them, but there may not always be access to cleaning facilities on site.

Even when water and soap are readily available, they may not be enough to shift the residue of modern construction and maintenance products.

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) advises

workers to use the 'avoid, protect and check' approach when it comes to looking after their hands. You should, therefore, avoid direct contact between unprotected hands and substances, products and wet work where practical. You should also protect the skin, as avoiding contact will not always be possible, and check your hands for the first signs of itchy, dry or red skin.

For some people, gloves might be the answer. For many jobs, however, gloves are simply not suitable and actually cause skin reactive problems, such as urticaria – an almost immediate raised, itchy rash.

Sometimes, the quick removal of irritants may be the only solution. In this case, workers will require a hand-cleaning wipe that is going to get rid of the mess first time, allowing them to get on with the job. Furthermore, these wipes must be preservative-free as some wipes may contain ingredients that can irritate the skin.

Concern has recently been raised about the increase in adverse skin reactions to Methylisothiazolinone (MIT) used in products such as baby wipes. Working closely with the European Society for Contact Dermatitis, the European personal care association, Cosmetics Europe, issued an industry-wide recommendation to discontinue the use of the preservative MIT in personal care products.

Companies such as Big



Wipes have anticipated these recommendations and now use preservative-free, mainly water-based formulations for their products. In addition to the four powerful cleaning agents, Big Wipes contain four dermatologically tested skin conditioners: aloe vera, lanolin, vitamin E and glycerine, which can all help to nourish and protect the skin.

The range has been assessed to the latest EU Regulation 1223/2009 for cosmetic products and also offers 99.9% antibacterial protection. All Big Wipes can be used without water and are therefore

suitable for on-site use where it may not be available.

The biodegradable formula also helps to ensure the removal of paint and varnishes, adhesives, oil, sealants and general grime from hands, tools and surfaces.

Individuals who are concerned they may have a skin problem should visit their GP for advice and treatment if needed. As the HSE advises, protection is an important step to preventing problems from occurring. Therefore wipes might well be the answer to protecting the most important tools of all – your hands.

## HVP/BIG WIPES COMPETITION

Big Wipes has teamed up with HVP to give away a year's supply of its 4x4 industrial-strength wipes, as well as 20 runner-up prizes of Big Wipes t-shirts. For your chance to win, read the article and answer the following question:

**Q: How many powerful cleaning agents and dermatologically tested skin conditioners do Big Wipes 4x4 contain?**

- A: One of each      **HVP 202**
- B: Two of each      **HVP 203**
- C: Four of each      **HVP 204**

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** • One winner will receive a year's supply of Big Wipes' 4x4 industrial-strength wipes, while 20 runners-up will each receive a t-shirt • By entering the competition you agree to be bound by these terms and conditions and all instructions set out above • The competition is open to registered UK readers of HVP over 18 years of age, except employees of Big Wipes and the Hemming Group • No purchase necessary • Only one entry per reader • No responsibility is accepted for illegible entries, or for those lost, delayed or damaged in the post • The editor's decision will be final and no correspondence will be entered into • Prizes subject to availability • Circle the enquiry number below on the enquiry card if you do not wish to receive further information about new products, offers or promotions from Big Wipes.

**HVP 210**

# HVP

HEATING VENTILATING & PLUMBING

HEATING VENTILATING & PLUMBING

JULY/AUGUST 2015

www.hvpmag.co.uk



## New home for EPH Controls

### WATER HEATING & STORAGE

Plan carefully to ensure you meet your customers' storage needs  
page 30



### DOMESTIC & LIGHT COMMERCIAL HEATING

Invest in smart controls to stay ahead of the game  
page 44



### RADIATORS & TOWEL RAILS

Why modern designs make towel warmers a stylish bathroom choice  
page 60



■ PLUS: TRICKS OF THE TRADE FOR COPPER PIPE SYSTEMS ■