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Emerald Isle Realty COVID-19 Cleaning Process and Safety Protocols

Emerald Isle Realty has always insisted upon the highest cleaning standard for our vacation rental homes and with the Coronavirus pandemic, cleanliness and sanitizing have necessitated even more stringent requirements to ensure the good health and safety of our vacation rental guests, homeowners and our housekeeping teams. Because of your previous VRHP (Vacation Rental Housekeeping Professionals) training, you and your team are already cleaning all surfaces in the rental, so the cleaning process does not need to change drastically. However, there are modifications you should make to your process to ensure that a previous guest does not infect a future guest, or you and your team. For yourself and your teams, mastering the wall-to-wall cleaning routine is now more imperative than ever, as it is the best method to ensure all areas will be properly disinfected and sanitized. The new COVID-19 Coronavirus, like the flu virus, is surrounded by a fatty membrane that is vulnerable to soap which is why handwashing with soap and water is so effective.

Training is more important than ever so that you and your housekeeping employees are aware of the most up to date cleaning and safety protocols recommended by the CDC, EPA and OSHA. Emerald Isle Realty has several training sources for videos to assist you in education for you and your team. We will be asking for verification that you and each member of your housekeeping team have viewed and discussed the training and implemented these new COVID-19 Cleaning Process and Safety Protocols.

Healthy Housekeepers Your housekeeping team must be in good health and you should insist that no member of your team reports to work if they have fever, cough, or any other possible signs of the COVID-19 Coronavirus so they do not risk infecting other members of your team or spreading the contagion in homes they are tasked with cleaning. Maintain 6 feet of social distancing between housekeepers and do not allow housekeepers to travel together in the same car. If approached by a rental guest, homeowner, another contractor or employee, maintain 6 feet of social distance during the encounter.

Upon Arriving at the Vacation Rental Home:

- **Be sure you are wearing the appropriate face mask, splash goggles and fresh gloves.**
- **As you enter to clean each main area or room, open doors and windows to allow cross ventilation and a free flow of air.**

The natural ocean cross breezes will help blow away residual air borne traces of the virus (you may need to use door stops to temporarily keep both doors open). Researchers from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases have studied the Coronavirus under laboratory conditions to better understand its viability outside of a host organism—in the air and on surfaces. In the air, the highest risk of contagion is from droplets, such as a recent sneeze hence the need we all have now for social distancing. Research is continuing on how long droplets may still be present after a person with the Coronavirus has departed and splash goggles provide extra protection against droplets. However, as an extra precaution we have requested guests leave ceiling fans on at their time of departure and HVAC system set to fan for continuous air circulation. Additionally, this is why we are recommending housekeepers open doors and windows so the ocean breezes assist with dispelling droplets. This will also create good ventilation for the stronger disinfectants and sanitizers you will be using. If it is raining, open windows and doors on the non-windward side of the property for ventilation. As cleaning is complete in each area of the property, close and lock windows and doors. Doors and windows only need to be open 20-30 minutes for effective cross-ventilation. All ceiling fans should also be left on a high setting.

Make sure you are using an EPA approved disinfecting cleanser or sanitizer.

Not all cleansers disinfect or sanitize, and when you're dealing with infection, you want to be sure you've eradicated it from all surfaces. The EPA offers a list of products with "Emerging Viral Pathogens AND Human Coronavirus claims for use against SARS-CoV-2."

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

Make sure you are reading all parts of the label on the disinfectant or sanitizer, following directions exactly, and following the dwelling time. Different disinfectants have different dwelling times; make sure you're allowing the specified dwell time. We strongly urge you to use disinfectant wipes, such as EPA approved Clorox disinfectant wipes. The wipes are disposable, which is ideal as the ultimate goal is not transferring potential bacteria and viruses to other properties and to your own home. We also carry a sanitizing product called Sani-Tyze that will be very effective. It can be used on all non-porous surfaces, including mirrors and glass tops. It comes in RTU bottles.

Gloves will be a necessary tool during cleaning, and while stripping and making beds. Wear disposable gloves when cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing surfaces. Gloves should be discarded between cleaning each room of a property, especially bathrooms. After removing gloves, take care to wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer. Gloves should be worn when stripping and collecting linens and towels. In an emergency, if disposable gloves are temporarily not available due to supply chain problems, you may use rubber gloves and wash gloves thoroughly while wearing them with disinfecting soap or cleaner in between each task just as you would carefully wash your hands. Take all soiled gloves with you for proper disposal, do not place in trash receptacles at the property.

In addition to all of the usual items on the Departure Cleaning Checklist:

1. **Wipe down light switches, lamps, cupboard handles, doorknobs, banisters, remotes, thermostats, and telephones.** It is extremely likely that your previous rental guests touched these points, so it is important to wipe them down. Make sure your cleaners know to give these areas special attention. Studies have proven that remote controls harbor the largest amount of bacteria than any other surface in a room including the toilet.
2. **Sanitize high-contamination sites.** Make sure to use a disinfectant spray on your bathroom toilet, sink, and trashcan. You should also disinfect your toilet brush. If toilet paper has been left behind by a previous guest, remove from toilet paper holder and place under sink. Place new, unwrapped roll of toilet paper on toilet paper holder. **Take caution to not spray bathroom walls as you're cleaning; doing so quickly discolors them.**

3. **Kitchen sanitizing** includes removing all silverware and glassware from the cabinets and running through an additional dishwashing cycle or washing by hand in hot, soapy water and rinsing in hot water. Time permitting, wearing clean gloves, dry with paper towels and place in the proper location in the kitchen. If time does not permit, it is acceptable to leave sanitized silverware and glasses in the dishwasher.
4. **Wipe down all appliances, electronics, and provided amenities.** Our properties have items such as irons, hair dryers, vacuums, brooms, etc., that most guests will touch. Wipe down all of these items in case the previous guest left them infected. If you have soap dispensers, sponges, or other items for guest use, make sure they are clean and/or new. Take stove knobs off to completely disinfect. Thoroughly wipe down all appliance control panels, as they are high-touch areas.
5. **Sanitize or disinfect solid surface furniture.** Disinfectant wipes or Sani-Tyze will be very helpful here. Dining room chairs will be important to completely wipe down, including backs, arms, and legs, and of course seats if there is no cushion, or the cushion can be lifted. Take note of all tabletops, coffee tables, and other solid furniture and wipe it down. Sani-Tyze and wipes should also be used on outside furniture.
6. **For upholstered surfaces and drapes, spray with Husky 824 which is an excellent sanitizing agent.** Current research, although testing is still continuing, indicates the COVID-19 virus may not live as long on soft surfaces as it does on hard surfaces.
7. **Bed making** will now be the responsibility of our housekeeping teams and not a separate linen team. Wearing gloves, carefully remove linens and towels and place in plastic bag and then inside designated soiled linen bag. Spray mattress pad and pillow protector with sanitizing spray Husky 824. For our housekeepers hired directly by Emerald Isle Realty, new this year we are providing replacement mattress pads and pillow protectors; homeowners are responsible for providing a clean mattress pad for each bed and clean pillow protectors prior to the first rental. If due to soiling replacement mattress pad or pillow protectors are required, contact your Emerald Isle Realty inspector immediately and the replacement will be delivered. Private

cleaners, ensure your homeowner provides clean mattress pads and pillow protectors for each arriving guest. Use a fresh pair of disposable gloves and make bed with linens provided and clean quilt/bedspread/triple sheeting. Inspect closet to be sure the additional bedspreads, blankets and quilts are encapsulated in their plastic zipper case or clear plastic bag with Coronavirus Note to Rental Guest clearly visible.

8. **Clean your cleaning items.** If there is liquid hand soap, dishwasher liquid, laundry detergent, or other supplies on shelves, in cabinets, or elsewhere, make sure you're wiping them down. These items don't always get a lot of attention, however, bacteria can still live on the surfaces, and they need a good wipe-down in case of infection. Disinfect your cleaning tools after each property that you and your team have finished cleaning.
9. **Just before you or your team leaves the property, have them disinfect/sanitize all entry methods for a property.** This might be a keypad, doorknobs, door handles on sliding glass doors, but in any of these cases, make sure the entry method has been thoroughly cleaned.
10. **Most importantly:** Pay more attention to what you are already doing in your cleaning routine. Change your gloves and have your team change their gloves between cleaning each room, and wash your hands often. Wear the proper mask and splash goggles for the cleaning task and chemicals you are using.
11. Emerald Isle Realty is able to supply you with **EPA recommended cleaning products** if you do not have your own professional supplier. There are absolutely no exceptions to not using EPA approved disinfecting and sanitizing products.
12. **Take pride in your work** as our rental guests have been guaranteed we are using enhanced cleaning techniques and products to ensure they are arriving to a professionally cleaned vacation rental home. **Know also how much Emerald Isle Realty appreciates you for truly being one of *our* essential workers during the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic.**