

# Is that really *clean*?

## 4 common motel cleaning myths

MURRAY MCDONALD | DIRECTOR OF DUPLEX CLEANING MACHINES

In the motel industry, presentation is paramount. First impressions are everything and guests are quick to make judgments about the “cleanliness” of their motel accommodation.

**P**resentation and cleanliness go hand in hand. If a facility is pleasant on the eye, smells fresh, and linen and towels are changed regularly, then it can be easy for a motel owner to believe their facility is “clean”. Unfortunately, this isn’t the case, and this type of thinking can be deceiving and lead to the spread of bacteria and disease.

Most motel owners, managers and staff would agree that hygiene is essential to the daily operations of their business, but some are unaware they may be using outdated cleaning methods. It is no longer industry best practice to use cleaning methods such as the “mop and bucket” or “spray and wipe”. These traditional methods are the ones that may provide the “presentation” but not the “cleanliness”.

The reasons why these practices are now outdated is two-fold. Firstly, these methods can result in grime, dirt and bacteria to be “moved around” rather than picked up and removed from the surface. Secondly, these methods leave a lot of room for human cleaning error. It’s easy to miss key surfaces, corners and crevices when using a wipe down method.

There are four common cleaning myths that are specific to the motel industry. If left unsolved for a long period of time, it can have dramatic effects on your business and guests.

### IF IT SMELLS “NICE” IT’S CLEAN

The smell of a room does not relate to the cleanliness of the room. In reality, no smell usually means something is clean. A fragrance or perfume merely masks bad smells, and does not solve the original problem.

For example, carpet crystals are a common masker of bacteria and grime. It’s essential you use a floor scrubber that agitates a floor surface to get deep within the fibres of carpet or hard floors. This will remove dirt and soil deep within the pores or fibres of the floor surface. This is where the smell is coming from and where bacteria are being harboured.

### FRESH SHEETS EQUAL CLEAN BED

Many motel cleaners know the prevalence of bed bugs. Therefore, much attention is paid to the daily replacement of bed sheets and linen, and regular vacuuming of beds, but these processes will not eliminate bed bugs.

The eggs that are laid by bed bugs are extremely difficult to get rid of, and the only way to eliminate bed bugs and their eggs is through deep steam cleaning. Bed bugs are vulnerable to high heat. Steam vapour temperatures of +180 degrees Celsius will provide a deep clean, deodorise and kill bed bugs and their eggs.

### VACUUMING WILL ENSURE A DEEP FLOOR CLEAN

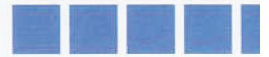
Traditional vacuuming is one of the main cleaning methods which people use to clean their floors. Although floors may visually look clean post vacuum, vacuums merely produce a top surface clean rather than the necessary deep clean.

Vacuuming will pick up surface dirt, when the actual odour causing grime, dirt and soil is deep down. Spots and spills should not be eliminated with just a traditional vacuum but rather through a 3 in 1 action of wash, scrub and dry. There are floor cleaners that provide this feature in one single pass.

### BATHROOM PLUS CHEMICALS EQUALS DISINFECTION

Bathrooms are typically cleaned by methods such as human scrubbing and large amounts of chemicals. With a high number of visits and guests, this can lead to the build up body fats, hairs, bacteria from wounds and potential disease outbreaks.

Bathrooms are one of the main rooms that can accumulate a large amount of unhygienic and unhealthy matter, putting the health of your guests and business reputation at risk.



Manual scrubbing and chemicals alone won't completely break down and dislodge matter and bacteria build up in pipes, drains and on surfaces. For example, a surface may "look" clean, but there is underlying bacteria, soap scum and mould that cause tinea.

Today's modern commercial cleaning processes that meet industry guidelines and standards involve steam cleaning, microfibre and investing in specifically designed machines.

A method known as "steam vapour" is a superheated, dry and consistent steam cleaning process. A good steam vapour cleaning method will involve the vapour to be heated to a temperature of +180 degrees Celsius, and at this temperature, it kills all bacteria, and vaporisers all mould, grime and stain build up.

Steam vapour is normally used in conjunction with microfibre. Microfibre is a man made synthetic textile fibre usually made of very fine nylon or polyester fibre strands. Traditional cloths spread residue and dust around rather than pick it up. Microfibre has strong holding power, and is designed for thorough cleaning.

There are cleaning machines designed to manoeuvre around critical surfaces in a bathroom as well. Toilet cleaning presents with many hard to reach areas, and there are machines today that are able to steam clean, detail clean and flush out hinges.