

## Reimagining your public restrooms - a practical guide

How else can we help?  
Get in touch to talk about your  
business.

[Torkglobal.com](https://torkglobal.com)

Tork is a global brand of Essity, a leading  
hygiene and health company.

More information at [www.essity.com](https://www.essity.com).



**73%**

won't return after  
a bad restroom  
experience.<sup>1</sup>



# Creating value for your business

Restrooms are essential, yet their impact on the broader business is often underestimated. Better hygiene practices not only enhance the user experience but also shape reputation, promote sustainability and can boost business performance. And just as these benefits are hidden, so too are the barriers impacting user satisfaction. Restrooms are for everyone, so inclusive hygiene in that space is vital. We call this hygiene for all.



What are the consequences when visitors choose not to return due to a negative experience with a business’s public or workplace restrooms? How can cleaning efficiencies be improved, and in what ways can investing in sustainable products benefit your business? These are some of the questions we will address in this guide, along with providing practical tips and insights to help you enhance restroom sustainability, boost efficiency, and ensure accessibility for the majority of visitors, regardless of their needs or circumstances.



As the person accountable for your business restrooms, you have a unique role in being able to improve the reputation and profitability of your operation and ensure that people want to return.

This underscores the critical importance of restroom hygiene and efficient cleaning, as small problems can quickly become big ones. And if your restroom isn’t at a high standard, your business may end up paying the price.

**Poor public restroom experiences impact business reputation and revenue.<sup>2</sup>**



# What are the consequences of a poor restroom experience?


Half of all visitors to a venue have taken steps to avoid using restrooms, a recent Tork survey revealed.<sup>2</sup> The top three actions they take in response can significantly reduce customer spending.


- 23% spend less time
- 13% avoid eating and drinking
- 10% chose not to return to that venue




Not only does a bad restroom experience make people less inclined to spend time at a venue, for **73%** of people, it also impacts their willingness to return.<sup>1</sup> More than **60%** had a lesser opinion of businesses or venues that provide hand hygiene facilities that are hard to use.<sup>3</sup>

## Your business implication

 For restaurants and commercial venues, the main impacts include reduced customer spending from shorter visits and the potential loss of repeat business.

 For workplaces, poor restroom experiences can lead to lower productivity and potentially higher staff turnover.

 Cleaning is a demanding job. Staff are at risk of various physical injuries, including back pain and muscle fatigue, as well as mental health challenges like stress, which impact their performance (fatigue, decreased motivation, lower quality of work, avoidance of certain tasks, slower pace) and, ultimately, cleaning quality.



**1 in 5**  
experience difficulties using soap or hand towel dispensers due to an injury, health condition, physical capability or as a parent with a child<sup>3</sup>

# Hidden barriers to hygiene: Why people avoid restrooms

Restrooms often contain hidden hygiene barriers that negatively impact user experience, affecting more people than you might think—1 in 2 individuals are impacted in public restrooms.<sup>4</sup>

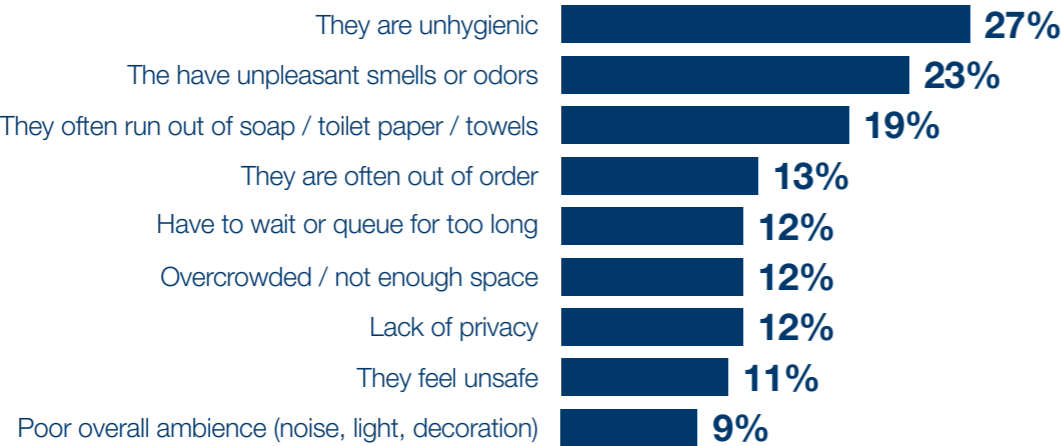
While providing accessible restrooms for wheelchair users is typically a legal requirement, it's important to consider that about 95% of those with cognitive or physical conditions do not use wheelchairs. This group includes, for example, individuals with impaired vision, hearing difficulties, sensitivity to loud noises, incontinence issues, and skin conditions.<sup>2</sup>

Additionally, people with reduced hand strength or parents carrying children may struggle with features like soap dispensers and hand towels. Addressing these diverse needs can greatly enhance restroom accessibility and user satisfaction.



1 in 2 people are likely to face barriers in the public restroom.<sup>4</sup>

## What are people’s main reasons for avoiding restrooms?<sup>2</sup>



## Examples of conditions, needs and circumstances



### Age related conditions

As we age, our capabilities change, impacting mobility, reach, and strength.



### Auditory sensitivities

Some people are more sensitive to loud noises than others, especially people who are neurodivergent or have autism, and young children.



### Hygiene concerns

Many people avoid public toilets and handwashing due to poor hygienic environment.



### Skin sensitivities

Some soaps contain ingredients that can cause skin irritation.

# 5 practical steps you can take to make restroom hygiene more inclusive for the majority of users:

- 1 Low push and pull force** – choose easy to use or touch free dispensers to accommodate people with low hand strength.
- 2 Color contrast** – pay extra attention to the dispenser color vs the wall color for people with low vision.
- 3 Noise** – ensure a quiet environment avoiding sensory overloads for people who are neurodivergent (e.g. autism).
- 4 Choose mild soaps** – offer dermatology-tested hand soaps suitable for people with eczema and other skin sensitivities.
- 5 Do the basics right** – ensure toilet paper is always stocked, the toilet seat is clean, and the bowl is fresh. Indicate when the restroom was last cleaned. Prioritize a secure environment and ensure visitors have the privacy they need.

“When you get to be my age with my joints, simply using the buttons and faucets in public restrooms can be a real struggle.”

Gay, 67



# Unlocking better business through more sustainable restrooms

As many as 67% of restroom visitors want restroom managers to prioritize sustainability. Businesses that prioritize responsible business practices, including sustainability, attract loyal customers, strengthen their brand reputation and inspire and retain employees.<sup>1</sup>

Taking a holistic approach makes operations more efficient, reduces waste, cuts cleaning time and helps businesses achieve their sustainability goals. Restrooms are a place most people visit, so it's an ideal location to make a great impression and communicate your commitment to the environment.

Signage should be used next to dispensers and mirrors to help show how you are supporting your goals and minimizing environmental impact.



# 5 practical steps you can take to make your restroom more sustainable:

- 1 Use and waste** - control consumption with one at a time dispensing.
- 2 Responsible end of life** – avoid landfill with recyclable packaging and with paper towel recycling services where available.
- 3 Responsible sourcing** – ensure your team understands the importance of responsible sourcing and third-party certified products.
- 4 Signage** – promote your sustainability practices with restroom signs.
- 5 Look at the full lifecycle** - lower your carbon footprint throughout the total lifecycle. To determine if a product really has a low impact, it is crucial to also look at the consumption or amount of the product used.

67%

would like public restroom managers to be more considerate about sustainability.<sup>1</sup>



Did you know?

Less wasteful products can improve efficiency and reduce costs.

# Improve business revenue by investing in restroom features and supporting cleaning staff

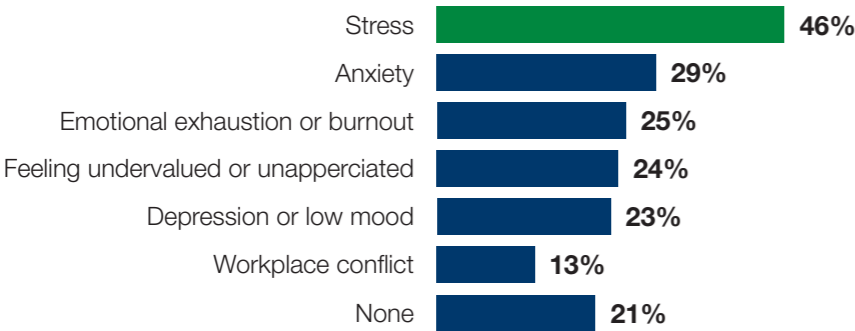


Using the right products not only improves efficiency, it helps cleaners deliver consistently clean restrooms with less effort, and less chance of injury. Innovations, like easy-to-use and refill dispensers, reduce time spent on maintenance, which is time that can be spent elsewhere.

7 in 10 cleaners report that about 20% of their time is spent on dispenser-related jobs.<sup>5</sup> By simplifying processes businesses can boost both hygiene standards and overall performance.

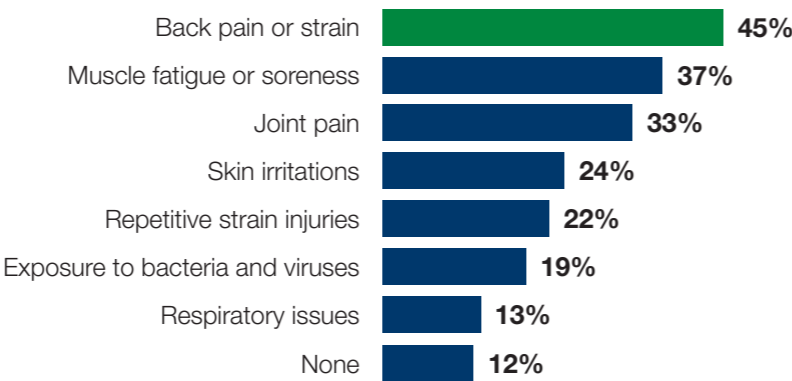
## Most cleaners report experiencing physical and mental conditions related to their work<sup>2</sup>

### Mental conditions



**46%**  
of cleaning staff  
feel stressed at  
work.

### Physical conditions



# 5 practical steps you can take to make hygiene in your restroom more efficient:

- 1 Choose high-capacity dispensers** to reduce the need for frequent refills, allowing cleaning staff to focus more on cleaning rather than refilling.
- 2 Reduce refilling** with compressed towels that dispense one-at-a-time and control consumption.
- 3 Improved maintenance** – use a standardized system across the facility. One key, one refill.
- 4 Choose ergonomic packaging** - easy handling and more efficient on the cleaning trolley.
- 5 Discover data-driven cleaning** - real-time data can help you identify service needs in your facility. This approach enables you to work smarter, exceed expectations and maximize efficiency.



“We always ensure the well-being of our employees and visitors by offering a very high quality working environment... data-driven cleaning allows us to be more proactive. It’s a win-win situation: employees are very satisfied with the high-quality of service, and our cleaning staff can work more efficiently.”

**Pascale Porée**  
Regional RUN Manager –West & South Europe at Uber in Paris, France

# What we offer

We think ahead so your business can thrive today and into the future.

We provide you with a holistic view on sustainability encompassing both people and the planet. We look at the entire product lifecycle and simplify it into four key areas; materials and packaging, use and waste, carbon, and hygiene for all.

EU Ecolabel and Forest Stewardship Council® certified refills available.<sup>8</sup>



One-at-a-time dispensing helps control consumption and reduce waste.<sup>10</sup>



Carbon neutral certified dispensers available.<sup>9</sup>



Certified Easy to use<sup>7</sup> Tork dispensers available.





## Sustainable hygiene - smart for business, better for people and the planet

**For people**

**Design for All:** We are committed to designing dispensers for the majority of users<sup>6</sup>

**Easy to use:** Products suitable for those with reduced hand function

**Easy to handle and carry:** Ergonomic packaging designed to save effort and time for cleaning staff

**Kind to skin:** Dermatologically tested soaps, with a skin-friendly pH

**For the planet**



**EU Ecolabel** (EU Flower) is the European Union’s labelling scheme, which certifies products that meet high environmental standards.  
[www.ecolabel.eu](http://www.ecolabel.eu)



**Forest Stewardship Council®** FSC®certification ensures that products come from responsibly managed forests that provide environmental, social and economic benefits.  
[www.fsc.org](http://www.fsc.org)



**ClimatePartner**  
certified product  
[climate-id.com/9VIUDN](https://climate-id.com/9VIUDN)

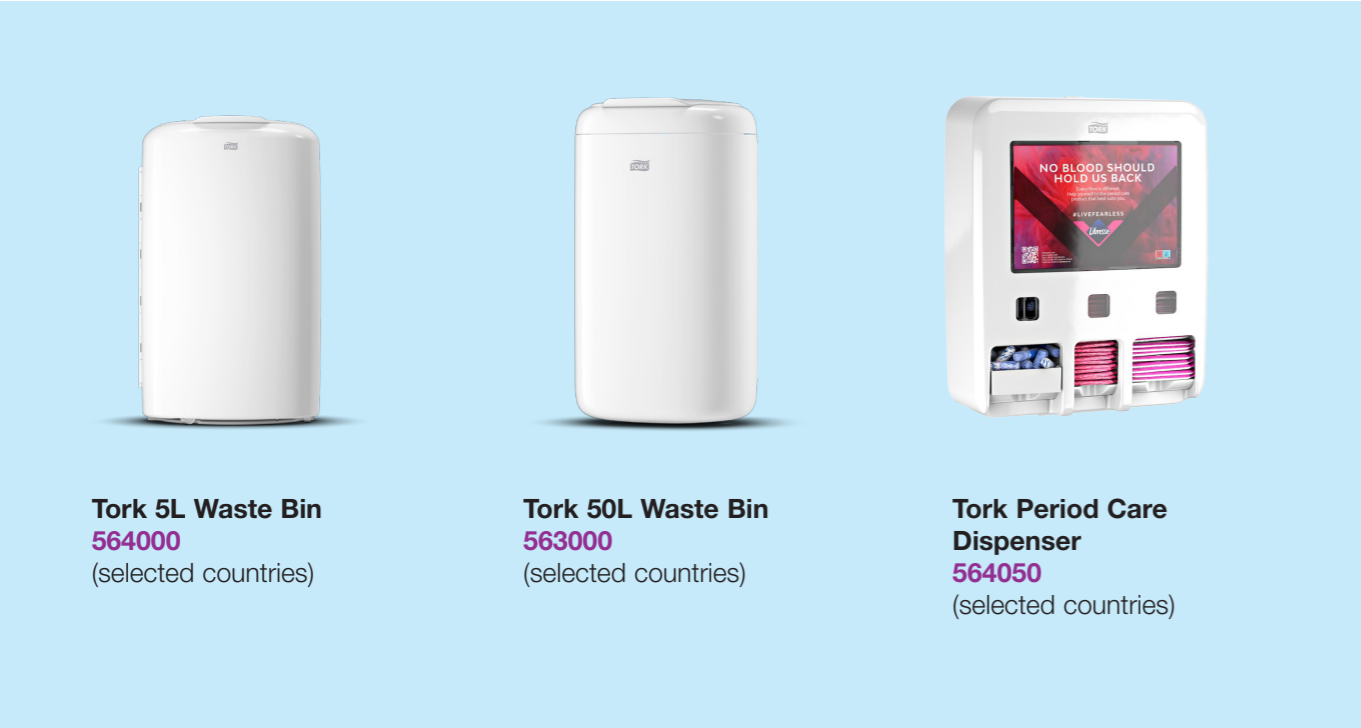


### Join us

We’ve joined forces with these organizations as part of our mission to improve hygiene in public restrooms. Visit **TorkGlobal.com** to learn more about the latest news and actions.



Products



Services

Tork Vision Cleaning

Data Driven Cleaning

Data-driven cleaning that harnesses the power of real-time data to identify when and where there are service needs in your facility.

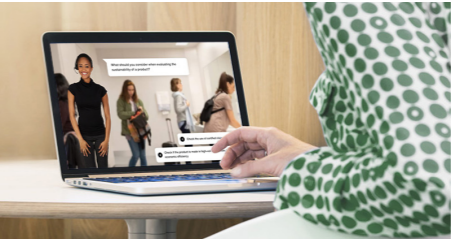
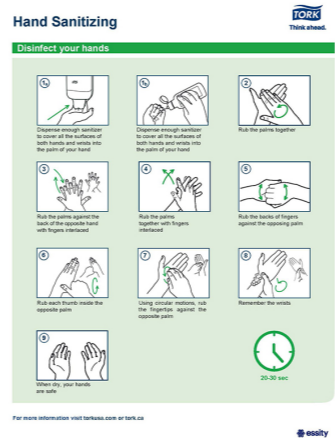
Tork PaperCircle (selected countries)

Recycling service for paper hand towels

Tork PaperCircle® service makes recycling used paper towels easy, supporting your environmental goals whilst maintaining the highest levels of hygiene. Turn waste into a resource.



Trainings and educational assets



**Tork Cleaning Quiz** - learn how to improve cleaning efficiency and reduce complaints  
<https://www.torkglobal.com/gb/en/for-your-business/industry/office>

Free hygiene trainings and posters

<https://www.torkglobal.com/gb/en/for-your-business/tools-training-guides/training-and-guides/clean-care-programme>

Free sustainability trainings and posters

<https://www.torkglobal.com/gb/en/sustainability>

1. Tork Insight Survey 2024, conducted in US, UK, Germany, France and Mexico among 6 000 end-users and 900 businesses.
2. Tork Insight Survey 2025, conducted in US, UK, Germany, France, Mexico, Canada, Australia, Spain, Sweden, Netherlands and Poland among 11,500 from the general public and 1,000 cleaning staff.
3. Tork Survey 2024, conducted in US among nationally representative group, barriers faced personally or in assisting others.
4. Based on Tork Insight Survey 2025 conducted of 11,500 respondents in US, UK, Germany, France, Mexico, Canada, Australia, Spain, Sweden, Netherlands and Poland. 54% of respondents reported experiencing, without limitation, physical conditions or self-diagnosed conditions, e.g. eczema, chronic pain, general anxiety, claustrophobia.
5. Behaviorally – Qualitative and quantitative office segment research with 600+ respondents in North America and Europe.
6. Standard EN17161. Design for All is a development process that considers diverse user needs to encourage and promote accessibility of products and services by as many people as possible.
7. Certified by Swedish Rheumatism Association, based on internal panel testing regarding soap refilling time.
8. FSC® labelled - product is made from responsible sourced fiber.
9. Produced with purchased certified renewable electricity and remaining carbon emissions offset with credits from climate projects. Valid for Elevation line dispensers sold or leased in Europe (except France) from May 2023. ClimatePartner certified product: [www.climate-id.com/9VIUDN](http://www.climate-id.com/9VIUDN)
10. Based on data from the field test that showed over 10,000 towels no double dispensing occurred over 98% of the time.