



Ahmedabad Sanitation Action Lab

Cleaning Of Public Toilets

Standard Operating Procedure

March 2015

Prepared by

Urban Management Centre

Ahmedabad Sanitation Action Lab (ASAL)

The **Ahmedabad Sanitation Action Lab (ASAL)** is a 3 year action research (2014-2017) for finding and implementing innovative solutions to school sanitation and sanitation problems in slums and slum-like settlements of Ahmedabad, in coordination with the government, NGOs and corporate partners. ASAL is led by Urban Management Centre (UMC) in partnership with Government of Gujarat (GoG) and the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC). The program is supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). ASAL's resource partners include Sintex Industries Ltd. (Sintex) and its associate partners include Mahila Housing Trust (MHT), MICA and Theatre Media Centre (TMC). The program provides technical assistance to the AMC for strengthening community engagement, improving operational and management processes for provision of water-sanitation services, and designing a targeted behaviour change communication campaign.

Urban Management Centre (UMC)

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Disclaimer

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to provide clear step-by-step procedure for cleaning public conveniences by urban local bodies either by their own staff or through private contractors. This SOP is developed based on compilation of available information, knowledge, field experience, and general practices to provide guidance to ULB staff/ private operators for providing better toilets, in a consistent and standardized manner. It is an attempt to present the information in clear and concise manner to ULB staff/ private operators. In general, this document should be used as a reference and adapted based on site-specific requirements. We have prepared this document in compliance with The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers (and their Rehabilitation) Act, 2013. However, in case of any differences in interpretation of the Act and this document, the Act shall supersede any recommendations of this document.

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List of abbreviations

AMC	Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation
CPHEEO	Central Public Health & Environmental Engineering Organization
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
ULB	Urban Local Body
UMC	Urban Management Centre
WC	Water Closet

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1. Introduction

Toilet cleaning is a regular operational process for ensuring functionality/ usability and quality of service delivery. Municipal authorities either appoint their own staff or engage private contractors to clean the public conveniences such as community toilets, public toilets and stand-alone urinals. We often assume that sanitation staff (whether municipal or appointed contractor's) is well aware of the standard toilet cleaning process. However, audits of public conveniences conducted by Urban Management Centre (UMC) in five cities of Gujarat (Ahmedabad, Borsad, Palitana, Viramgam and Wankaner), reveals that cleanliness of toilets emerged as the largest problem (Urban Management Centre, 2014). Out of around 1,600 public conveniences in Ahmedabad, only 2 percent of public convenience facilities were found clean (Urban Management Centre, 2013) during the survey.

Typically, most of the urban local bodies (ULBs) including Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) have three models in practice for cleaning of public conveniences. Firstly, municipal staff cleans community toilets – usually located near slums and slum-like settlements, with or without the help of equipment such as a 'nuisance tanker'. Secondly, ULBs appoint private contractors to clean community toilets and thirdly, complete operation and maintenance (O&M) of the facility, including its regular cleaning, has been contracted to a third-party (pay & use toilet contractors). During our survey of public conveniences, we found poor cleanliness irrespective of the cleaning mechanism adopted. This emphasized on the need for a standard operating procedure (SOP) for cleaning of public conveniences.

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to provide clear step-by-step procedure for cleaning public conveniences by urban local bodies either by their own staff or through private contractors. This SOP is developed based on compilation of available information, knowledge, field experience, and general practices to provide guidance to ULB staff/ private operators for providing better toilets, in a consistent and standardized manner. It is an attempt to present the information in clear and concise manner to ULB staff/ private operators. In general, this document should be used as a reference and adapted based on site-specific requirements. We have prepared this document in compliance with The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers (and their Rehabilitation) Act, 2013. However, in case of any differences in interpretation of the Act and this document, the Act shall supersede any recommendations of this document.

This SOP should be adopted by all ULBs or contractors appointed by ULBs for cleaning of public conveniences. It is strongly advised that a strict monitoring mechanism as per the provisions of 'Sanitation Index'¹ by Government of Gujarat (UD&UHD, Government of Gujarat, 2014) should be put in place to ensure compliance of cleaning activities with this SOP. This SOP should be an integral part of contracts of all O&M and cleaning agencies appointed by ULBs.

¹ Sanitation Index is a framework and a monitoring system to ensure cleanliness of all government buildings in the state of Gujarat and facilities provided by government boards, corporations and ULBs. Urban Management Centre is the knowledge partner of the Government of Gujarat for Mahatma Gandhi Swachhata Mission.

2. Standard operating procedures for cleaning of toilets

2.1. Separating ‘operation’ and ‘maintenance’

General maintenance of the toilets involves in two components – a) daily cleaning and b) maintenance of physical infrastructure. ‘Operation’ encompasses general day-to-day functions of cleaning of toilet seats, urinals, floor, walls, doors, windows, sanitary fixtures and rest of the interior and exterior of the toilet block. ‘Maintenance’ includes repair (and replacement) of infrastructure, building (civil construction), plumbing, sanitary and electrical fixtures, and other types of repairs as required.

This SOP details out activities under operations, i.e. daily cleaning. For maintenance, we recommend strict adherence to the manual prepared by Central Public Health and Environmental Engineering Organisation (CPHEEO).

2.2. Equipment and supplies needed

Cleaning of toilet requires various equipment and supplies. These typically include safety gear for the cleaner, consumables (such as detergent and disinfectants) and other miscellaneous items for convenience. A detailed list of equipment and supplies required has been provided in the table below.

Cleaner safety gear	Cleaning equipment	Consumables	Other equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rubber Gloves - Face mask - Boots - Uniform/ Apron/ Overall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brush for cleaning toilet seats/ bowls - Plastic scrubber /brush for cleaning wash basins - Brush/ scouring paper for cleaning tiles - Brooms for wet areas - Brooms for dry areas - Cloths/ mops for cleaning floor - Floor Wipers - Plastic scrubber/ sponge/ cloths for scrubbing plumbing fixtures and other general purposes - Bucket for mixing floor cleaning agent with water - Mug for pouring floor cleaning agent mix - Sponges/ soft cloth for cleaning mirrors - Dust collecting pan - Dustbins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liquid sanitary ware cleaning agent - Liquid/ powdered tiles cleaning agent - Liquid/ powdered floor cleaning agent - Liquids/ powdered plumbing fixtures cleaning agent - Soap/ non-abrasive cleaning liquid/ powder (non-acidic) - Disposable garbage bags - Hand washing soap - Naphthalene balls - Baking soda - Glass and mirror cleaning liquid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sign boards/ Warning Signs - Trolley/ tray for carrying cleaning equipment - Room freshener (optional) - Plumber’s snakes - Plunger - Ladder

2.3. Cleaning process

A public convenience may typically comprise of the toilet seats, urinals, bathing units, common areas, hand washing areas, water storage, electrical fixtures, plumbing fixtures, storage areas (janitor's room) and immediate surroundings. Each area has specific requirements for cleaning and their frequency may vary as needed. Some areas also require special equipment and supplies for cleaning. In this SOP, cleaning directions for various sub-components of the public conveniences have been provided along with the minimum frequency of cleaning.

2.3.1. Cleaning of bathing areas

Task	Equipment/ supplies
Frequency – minimum once a day	
1. Wash hands and wear gloves, face mask, protective uniform/ apron/ overall and boots	Gloves, face mask, protective uniform/ apron/ overall and boots
2. Place the signboard to caution users of the toilet	Signboards
3. Assemble items to be used for cleaning in a trolley/ tray	Trolley/ tray
4. In case human faecal matter is present in the cubicle, water jet through a flexible pipe should be used for draining the content in the floor drain.	Flexible pipe
5. In case the floor drain is choked, the cubicle should be cordoned-off and engineering department of the ULB should be informed.	
6. Apply liquid/ powdered tiles cleaning agent on the tiled walls of the bathroom and leave it for 10 minutes	Liquid/ powdered cleaning agent for tiles
7. Scrub the wall tiles using a brush/ scouring paper and rinse with water. Use a dry cloth to wipe the tiles and plumbing fixtures	Brush/ scouring paper, dry cloth
8. Apply liquid/ powdered plumbing fixtures cleaning agent on taps, faucet, and other plumbing fixtures and scrub using plastic scrubber/ sponge.	Liquid/ powdered cleaning agent for plumbing fixtures , plastic scrubber/sponge
9. Apply liquid/ powdered floor cleaning agent on the floor of the bathroom and then leave 15 minutes	Liquid/ powdered floor cleaning agent
10. Use a brush/ wet broom to scrub floor and rinse floor with water	Brush/ wet broom
11. Drain excess water from the floor using a wiper and mop the floor using a clean dry cloth. Remove the dirt collected at the trap.	Wiper, dry cloth/ mop
12. Wipe all doors, windows and ventilators with a damp cloth	Damp cloth
13. Clean and rinse all brushes, cloths, sponges and brooms used in the process and store them in the janitor's area.	
14. Remove gloves and wash hands with soap thoroughly.	Hand washing soap
15. Conduct final inspection for leakages and repairs required and update work records.	
Frequency- Weekly	
1. Clean cobwebs and dust on ceiling and ventilators using a long handle broom/ brush before cleaning the bathroom	Long handle dry broom/ brush

2.3.2. Cleaning of water-closet (western) cubicles and urinals

Task	Equipment/ supplies
Frequency – minimum once a day	
1. Wash hands and wear gloves, face mask, protective uniform/ apron/ overall and boots	Gloves, face mask, protective uniform/ apron/ overall and boots
2. Place the signboard to caution users of the toilet	Signboards
3. Assemble items to be used for cleaning in a trolley/ tray	Trolley/ tray
4. Remove garbage bags from all dustbins and place the dustbin outside the water closet (WC) cubicle	
5. In case human faecal matter is present in the cubicle, water jet through a flexible pipe should be used for draining the content in the floor drain.	Flexible pipe
6. In case solid waste (other than human faecal matter) is present on the floor of the cubicle, it should be collected discarded in the dustbin.	Dust collecting pan
7. In case solid waste (other than human faecal matter) has choked the WC, the cubicle should be cordoned-off and engineering department of the ULB should be informed.	
8. Apply liquid/ powdered tiles cleaning agent on the tiled walls of the WC cubicle and leave it for 10 minutes	Liquid/ powdered cleaning agent for tiles
9. Scrub the wall tiles using a brush/ scouring paper and pour water on the wall tiles. Use a dry cloth to wipe the tiles and plumbing fixtures	Brush/ scouring paper, dry cloth
10. Apply liquid/ powdered plumbing fixtures cleaning agent on taps, faucet, and other plumbing fixtures and scrub using plastic scrubber/sponge.	Liquid/ powdered cleaning agent for plumbing fixtures , plastic scrubber/sponge
11. For western WC seats, apply soap/ non-abrasive cleaning liquid/ powder on the seat rim and seat cover and clean it using sponge/ cloth. Pour water over the rim and the cover and wipe it using a dry cloth.	Soap/ non-abrasive cleaning liquid/ powder (non-acidic)
12. Flush once and then apply liquid sanitary ware cleaning agent inside the WC bowls/ seats. Leave it for 10 minutes.	Liquid sanitary ware cleaning agent
13. Clean the inside of the WC bowl/ seat using a brush ensuring all stains are removed.	Brush for cleaning toilet seats/ bowls
14. Flush or pour water to rinse the inside of the WC bowl/ seat	
15. Apply liquid/ powdered floor cleaning agent on the floor of the WC cubicle and then leave 15 minutes	Liquid/ powdered floor cleaning agent
16. Use a brush/ wet broom to scrub floor and rinse floor with water	Brush/ wet broom
17. Drain excess water from the floor using a wiper and mop the floor using a clean dry cloth.	Wiper, dry cloth/ mop
18. Wipe all doors, windows and ventilators with a damp cloth	Damp cloth
19. Place a fresh garbage bag in the dustbins and place them in the WC cubicles	Garbage bags
20. Clean and rinse all brushes, cloths, sponges and brooms used in the process and store them in the janitor's area.	
21. Remove gloves and wash hands with soap thoroughly.	Hand washing soap
22. Conduct final inspection for leakages and repairs required and update work records.	
Frequency- Weekly	
1. Clean cobwebs and dust on ceiling and ventilators using a long handle dry broom/ brush before cleaning toilet	Long handle dry broom/ brush

2.3.3. Cleaning of water-closet (Indian) cubicles and urinals

Task	Equipment/ supplies
Frequency – minimum once a day	
1. Wash hands and wear gloves, face mask, protective uniform/ apron/ overall and boots	Gloves, face mask, protective uniform/ apron/ overall and boots
2. Place the signboard to caution users of the toilet	Signboards
3. Assemble items to be used for cleaning in a trolley/ tray	Trolley/ tray
4. Remove garbage bags from all dustbins and place the dustbin outside the WC cubicle	
5. In case human faecal matter is present in the cubicle, water jet through a flexible pipe should be used for draining the content in the WC.	Flexible pipe
6. In case solid waste (other than human faecal matter) is present in the cubicle, it should be discarded in the dustbin.	Dust collecting pan
7. In case solid waste (other than human faecal matter) has choked the WC, the cubicle should be cordoned-off and engineering department of the ULB should be informed.	
8. Apply liquid/ powdered tiles cleaning agent on the tiled walls of the WC cubicle and leave it for 10 minutes	Liquid/ powdered cleaning agent for tiles
9. Scrub the tiled walls using a brush/ scouring paper and pour water on the wall tiles. Use a dry cloth to wipe the tiles	Brush/ scouring paper, dry cloth
10. Apply liquid/ powdered plumbing fixtures cleaning agent on taps, faucet, and other plumbing fixtures and scrub using plastic scrubber/sponge.	Liquid/ powdered cleaning agent for plumbing fixtures, plastic scrubber/sponge
11. Apply liquid/ powdered floor cleaning agent on the floor of the WC cubicle and then leave 15 minutes	Liquid/ powdered floor cleaning agent
12. Use a brush/ wet broom to scrub floor and rinse floor with water	Brush/ wet broom
13. Flush once and then apply liquid sanitary ware cleaning agent inside the WC bowls/ seats. Leave it for 10 minutes.	Liquid sanitary ware cleaning agent
14. Clean the inside of the WC bowl/ seat using a brush ensuring all stains are removed.	Brush for cleaning toilet seats/ bowls
15. Flush or pour water to rinse the inside of the WC bowl/ seat	
16. Drain excess water from the floor using a wiper and mop the floor using a clean dry cloth.	Wiper, dry cloth/ mop
17. Wipe all doors, windows and ventilators with a damp cloth	Damp cloth
18. Place a fresh garbage bag in the dustbins and place them in the WC cubicles	Garbage bags
19. Clean and rinse all brushes, cloths, sponges and brooms used in the process and store them in the janitor's area.	
20. Remove gloves and wash hands with soap thoroughly.	Hand washing soap
21. Conduct final inspection for leakages and repairs required and update work records.	
Frequency- Weekly	
1. Clean cobwebs and dust on ceiling and ventilators using a long handle dry broom/ brush before cleaning toilet	Long handle dry broom/ brush

2.3.4. Cleaning of common areas of the facility

Task	Equipment/ supplies
Frequency – minimum once a day	
1. Wash hands and wear gloves, face mask, protective uniform/ apron/ overall and boots	Gloves, face mask
2. Place the signboard to caution users of the toilet	Signboards
3. Assemble items to be used for cleaning in a trolley/ tray	Trolley/ tray with broom, mop and bucket
4. Remove garbage bags from all dustbins and place the dustbin outside the common area	
5. Sweep away dust and dirt from the common area using a dry broom	Dry broom
6. Collect the dust and dirt using a dust collecting pan and dispose it in the dustbin	Dust collecting pan
7. Apply liquid/ powdered floor cleaning agent on the floor of the common area and leave 15 minutes	Liquid/ powdered floor cleaning agent
8. Use a brush/ wet broom to scrub floor and rinse floor with water	Brush/ wet broom
9. Drain excess water from the floor using a wiper and mop the floor using a clean dry cloth.	Wiper, dry cloth/ mop
10. Wipe all doors, windows and ventilators with a damp cloth	Damp cloth
11. Place a fresh garbage bag in the dustbins and place them in the common areas	Garbage bags
12. Clean and rinse all brushes, cloths, sponges and brooms used in the process and store them in the janitor's area.	
13. Remove gloves and wash hands with soap thoroughly.	Hand washing soap
14. Conduct final inspection for leakages and repairs required and update work records.	
Frequency- Weekly	
1. Clean the cobwebs and dust on ceiling and ventilators using a long handle dry broom before cleaning the floor	Long handle dry broom/ brush

2.3.5. Cleaning of wash basins

Task	Equipment/ supplies
Frequency – minimum once a day	
1. Wash hands and wear gloves, face mask, protective uniform/ apron/ overall and boots	Gloves, face mask
2. Clear the area around the wash basins and remove objects such as soap dish, tissue paper, towels or other such material and place them outside the cleaning area	
3. Apply liquid/ powdered plumbing fixtures cleaning agent on taps, soap stand and towel hanger and scrub using plastic scrubber/sponge. Exterior surfaces taps below wash basins (if any) and piping under basins (if any) should also be cleaned in the same manner.	Liquid/ powdered cleaning agent for plumbing fixtures, plastic scrubber/ sponge
4. Apply cleaning agent in the basin and leave it for 10 minutes. Then, scrub the wash basin using plastic scrubber/ brush.	Liquid/ powdered cleaning agent for wash basin, plastic scrubber/ brush.
5. Use baking soda and a scrubber/ sponge/ cloth for stubborn marks	Baking soda, scrubber/ sponge/ cloth
6. Rinse the plumbing fixtures and wash basin with water	
7. Check the hand wash soap dish for adequate soap and refill if required	Hand washing soap
8. Remove gloves and wash hands with hand washing soap thoroughly	Hand washing soap
9. Conduct final inspection for leakages and repairs required and update work records	

2.3.6. Cleaning of electrical fixtures

Task	Equipment/ supplies
Frequency – minimum once a month	
1. Wash hands and wear gloves, face mask, protective uniform/ apron/ overall and boots	Gloves, face mask
2. Switch-off the power supply to the fixture being cleaned. In case of bulbs and tube lights, remove the light.	
3. Remove lights from their holders and wipe using a damp clean cloth. Wipe exhaust fans with a damp cloth. Use ladder or a stool to reach fixtures placed at higher levels.	Cloth
4. Wipe lights using a dry clean cloth and place it in their respective holders. Inspect the fixture to ensure it is working.	Cloth
5. Remove gloves and wash hands with hand washing soap thoroughly	Hand washing soap
6. Conduct final inspection for repairs required and update work records	

2.3.7. Cleaning of plumbing fixtures

Task	Equipment/ supplies
Frequency – minimum once a day	
1. Wash hands and put on gloves and face mask.	Gloves, face mask
2. Wipe plumbing fixtures with a mixture of detergent and water with the help of cloth.	Cloth
3. Rinse and clean plumbing fixtures with a dry cloth in order to remove dust/dirt	Cloth
4. Remove gloves and mask. Wash hands thoroughly after cleaning.	Hand washing soap
5. Conduct final inspection for leakages and repairs required and update work records	

2.3.8. Cleaning of painted walls

Task	Equipment/ supplies
Frequency – minimum once a month	
1. Wash hands and wear gloves, face mask, protective uniform/ apron/ overall and boots.	Gloves, face mask
2. Remove obstacles/ furnishings and place them outside the cleaning area.	
3. Place the signboard to caution users of the toilet	Signboards
4. Immerse and wring wall washing tool into the solution (mix of water and wall cleaning solution)	Wall washing tool
5. Clean the area beginning from the top.(Change to fresh solution at least once per room)	
6. Replace all the furnishings to original positions.	
7. Remove gloves and mask. Wash hands thoroughly after cleaning.	Hand washing soap
8. Conduct final inspection for repairs required and update work records	

2.4. Maintenance

During our survey, we observed many public conveniences were rendered unusable due to infrastructural maintenance issues. The most common problem was choking of drainage lines. Other major problems include broken doors and ventilators, broken water supply pipeline, faulty slopes accumulating water, non-functional flushes and absence of adequate light and ventilation. Such issues can be fixed through periodic maintenance by the relevant department. This SOP identifies key areas for maintenance but does not provide details guidelines for undertaking the same. CPHEEO and other such guidelines may be adopted for the same.

Major maintenance issues identified:

- i. Leakages and/ or broken water supply plumbing and fixtures such as taps, faucets and flush
- ii. Choked sewerage pipes and filled septic tanks/ pits leading to overflow of waste water
- iii. Civil repairs to the building including doors, windows, ventilators, flooring, walls, ceiling, paint, steps and/ or ramps leading to the plinth.
- iv. Failure of electrical fixtures such as lights, exhaust fans/ systems and plug points.
- v. Clearing access to the facility by removing encroachments, debris/ waste, water logging, stray animals and vegetation (if obstructive).

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