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EDITORIAL CONTACT:
Iris Raylesberg
Kapnek Communications
215-830-9890

WHAT IS THE TOP GERM CONCERN FOR 2004?
THE FLU, ACCORDING TO SURVEY
***People are Also Asked How to Fight Workplace Germs
And Get Colleagues to Wash Up***

ROSWELL, Ga. (January 5, 2004) – With all the recent news about flu outbreaks across the country it should come as no surprise that the flu is the top health issue for the New Year.

In a survey conducted by Opinion Research Corporation for Kimberly-Clark Professional, 66 percent cited the flu as the health issue they were most concerned about for 2004. Last year's top germs stories -- SARS and the Norwalk virus -- barely registered and were even eclipsed by the common cold. With heightened flu awareness people are embracing a chief recommendation for avoiding it – hand washing.

When asked what steps were most important in reducing the spread of germs, six in 10 people chose washing hands more frequently, a key recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. All other choices – including flu shots – trailed.

Germs and the Workplace

The survey also queried full or part-time employees about how to make their workplaces healthier and more hygienic. Once again, hand washing ruled.

In a question about what people would most like sick colleagues to do if they can't stay home from work, 42 percent of workers chose having ill co-workers wash their hands as often as possible – ideally every time they touched their eyes, noses or mouths. Staying away from other people came in second. However, few went so far as to choose a more draconian option for infected colleagues –relegating them to a special “sick room” for the duration of their illnesses.

Hand washing surfaced again in a question about what bugs people most about co-workers and the spread of germs. While 38 percent of employed respondents cited co-workers coming to work ill as their chief peeve, nearly a quarter said they were most perturbed when sick colleagues didn't wash their hands after using the bathroom.

Given this, the obvious question is how can co-workers be compelled to wash hands more often? Hand washing reminder signs like those found in restaurants were the top choice for nearly one-third of employees surveyed. But almost a quarter selected a more resounding (and embarrassing) method – an alarm that goes off when people leave the restroom without washing up.

Following this were:

- Health information about the importance of hand washing in preventing the spread of germs
- High quality soap and paper towels that don't irritate the skin
- A recorded message that advises people to wash their hands as they enter and leave the restroom.

When asked how they would like to receive educational information on hand washing, nearly half suggested pamphlets, followed by videos or DVDs, lunchtime seminars, and audiotapes or CDs for the car.

What can management do to prevent the spread of germs in the workplace? The top choice among working respondents, at 39 percent, was establishing a policy requiring employees with contagious infections to stay

home until they recover. Next was to have management supply an arsenal of germ-fighting products including:

- Waterless hand sanitizers for everyone's desks
- Germ-killing paper towels and facial tissue and antimicrobial soaps
- And installing ultraviolet lamps in ventilation systems to kill germs and disinfect workplace air

No-Touch: A Top Germ-Fighting Choice

Which away-from-home bathrooms do people think are most hygienic? Hotels were the hands-down winner, selected by 42 of all respondents. Falling far below were office buildings, restaurants, schools and universities. Manufacturing facilities and stadiums barely registered a positive response.

Because the bathroom is strongly associated with workplace germs, the survey also asked about ways to create a healthier and more hygienic restroom environment at work. No-touch systems were the top choice among workers. Next were products that capture or kill germs, such as waterless hand sanitizers or germ-killing facial tissue or towels. These were followed by audio and visual hand washing reminders, automatic disinfection of stall areas after each flush, availability of toilet seat sanitizing wipes, and disposable soap systems that are replaced when the product is used up.

No-touch restroom products and systems also scored high in another survey question. Ninety-six percent of employed respondents described no-touch systems as "important" in preventing the spread of germs in the restroom, with 68 percent rating no-touch systems as either "extremely" or "very important."

What's most offensive about workplace restrooms? Dirty toilets. Putrid potties were followed by: odors or lack of fresh air, and run-out of key supplies such as soap, towels and bathroom tissues. Much lower on the list were: dirty sinks and counters, trash on the floor, and dirty towel and tissue dispensers. Twenty-two percent of employed respondents said "all of these" were equally gross.

So where does the buck stop when it comes to keeping the workplace hygienic and germ-free? The cleaning staff, according to 40 percent of the

workers surveyed. But more than a quarter of these respondents said responsibility rested with employees themselves.

That may explain why more than six in 10 employees reported staying home when ill – either for a day or two or until they were completely recovered. Then again, more than a quarter go to work when they’re sick. Better keep washing those hands!

Survey Methodology

The survey of 1,045 adults nationwide was conducted by telephone from December 12-15, 2003 by Opinion Research Corporation. The margin of error is plus or minus three percent. Of those surveyed, 526 were employed either full or part-time outside the home.

About Kimberly-Clark

Kimberly-Clark Professional, based in Roswell, Ga., provides tissue and towel products, skin care products and industrial wipers for workplace settings. These include the new stainless steel SANITOUCH® Hands-Free Towel Dispenser, softer KLEENEX® 600’ Hard Roll Towel, KLEENEX® COTTONELLE® Bath Tissue and KLEENEX® Facial Tissue. For more information, visit the Kimberly-Clark Professional web site at www.kcprofessional.com.

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Health and Hygiene Survey Tabulations
 Conducted by Opinion Research Corporation
 For Kimberly-Clark Professional
 1,045 Respondents for Questions 1-3
 526 Respondents for Questions 4-13

1. *Which of the following health issues are you MOST concerned about for the New Year?*

	<u>Total</u>
The flu	66%
The common cold	14%
SARS	04%
The Norwalk virus	02%
None of these	14%
Don't know	01%

2. *Which of the following away-from-home restrooms do you think are the MOST clean and hygienic?*

Hotels	42%
Office buildings	18%
Restaurants	18%
Schools and universities	10%
Manufacturing facilities	01%
Stadiums	01%
Don't know/None of these	10%

3. *With so much news about infectious diseases this year, such as the Norwalk virus, the flu and SARS, which of the following steps do you think are MOST important in reducing the spread of germs and infectious diseases?*

Washing your hands more frequently	60%
Getting a flu shot	14%
Staying away from anyone who is sick	09%
Avoid touching surfaces that could be contaminated by other people's germs, such as phones, computer keyboards, pens, pencils	04%
Getting more rest and sleep	04%
Taking more vitamins	04%
Avoid hugging or shaking hands with people	03%
Don't know/None of these	02%

4. *Which of the following bugs you MOST about co-workers and the spread of germs?*

When they come to work sick	38%
When they don't wash their hands after using the restroom	23%
When they sneeze and don't cover their noses or sneeze into their hands	19%
When they blow their noses and then touch common surfaces, such as phones, copiers, doorknobs, etc.	10%
When they complain about being sick	04%
When they sneeze into a handkerchief and then use it again	02%
Don't know /None of these	04%

5. *Which of the following do you think would be MOST effective in making sure your co-workers wash their hands after using the restroom?*

Hand washing reminder signs like those found in restaurants	30%
An alarm that sounds when people leave the restroom without washing their hands	23%
Health information about the importance of hand washing in preventing the spread of germs	17%
High quality soap and paper towels that don't irritate the skin	15%
A recorded message that advises people to wash their hands as they enter and leave the restroom	10%
Don't know/None of these	04%

6. *If your co-workers can't stay home when they're sick, which of the following would you MOST like them to do?*

Wash their hands as often as possible, ideally every time they touch their eyes, nose or mouth	42%
Stay away from other people as much as possible	28%
Avoid breathing on other people	08%
Work in a special "sick room"	06%
Use a special germ-killing facial tissue to help kill germs	06%
Stay away from surfaces that other people touch	06%
Don't know/none of these	04%

7. *Which of the following would you MOST like to see the management of your workplace do to help reduce the spread of germs?*

Establish a policy requiring employees with contagious infections or diseases to stay home from work until they're better	39%
Provide waterless hand sanitizers for everyone's desks	19%
Install ultraviolet lamps that kill germs in ventilation systems to disinfect the air in your workplace	17%
Provide germ-killing paper towels and facial tissue and antimicrobial soap for everyone's use	17%
Don't know	08%

8. *Which of the following do you think would be MOST likely to create a healthier and more hygienic workplace restroom? Would you say...?*

No-touch restroom products and systems to avoid contact with other people's germs	35%
Availability of products that capture or kill germs, such as waterless hand sanitizers or germ-killing facial tissue or towels	17%
Audio and visual reminders to wash hands each time someone enters or leaves the restroom	15%
Automatic disinfection of stall area after each toilet flush	13%
Availability of toilet seat sanitizing wipes for every trip to the toilet	08%
Disposable soap systems that are replaced when the product is used up	06%
Don't know/None of these	06%

9. *How important do you think no-touch restroom products and systems, in which you touch only the towel or tissue that you use, are in preventing the spread of germs? Would you say they are...?*

<u>Important (Net)</u>	<u>96%</u>
Extremely important/Very important (Subnet)	68%
Extremely important	33%
Very important	35%
Important/Somewhat Important (Subnet)	27%
Important	14%
Somewhat important	13%
Not important	03%
Don't know/None of these	02%

10. *In terms of hygiene, what grosses you out MOST about your workplace restroom? Would you say...?*

Dirty toilets	22%
Odors or lack of fresh air, making you feel like you're breathing in germs	17%
Running out of supplies such as soap, towels and bathroom tissue	16%
Dirty sinks and counters	07%
Trash on the floor	06%
Dirty towel and tissue dispensers	02%
All of these	22%
Don't know/None of these	07%

11. *From the following list, who do you think should be MOST responsible for keeping your workplace hygienic and free from germs?*

Cleaners and janitorial staff	40%
You, the employee	27%
Building management	12%
Department supervisors or company management	10%
Human resources or employee health departments	04%
Local health department	03%
Don't know/None of these	03%

12. *Which of the following BEST describes what you generally do about work when you have a bad cold or other contagious infection?*

You stay home until you're well	33%
You stay home for a day or two and then go back to work even if you're not fully recovered	32%
You go to work even if you're sick	27%
You whine and carry on	04%
You shut the door and take a nap	01%
Don't know/None of these	03%

13. *Would you be interested in receiving educational materials or information from your employer about preventing the spread of germs in the workplace in the form of...?*

Any (Net)	58%
Pamphlets	45%
Videos or DVDs	19%
Lunchtime seminars	15%
Audiotapes or CDs for the car	12%
Not interested in receiving these materials/None of these	37%
Don't know	05%