

## Gas pump myth busting

By now you may have seen this post on social media that warns that coronavirus is spreading rapidly at gas pumps. Convenience stores sell 80% of the gas in the country and are classified as “essential businesses” during this pandemic for providing fuel and food to the public.

Snopes.com debunks a claim that gas pumps are responsible for giving people the coronavirus, noting that gas pumps “are only one of many commonly-handled objects that could transmit the COVID-19 coronavirus, and we have found no substantiated reports of anyone’s having been infected in that fashion yet.

John Eichberger, executive director of the Fuels Institute, states that convenience stores and gas stations are doing what they can to combat the spread of COVID-19 by cleaning and sanitizing their facilities regularly and sharing with their customers how often they are sanitizing down high touch-point areas.

“If consumers are really worried about touching a gas pump handle, they can do what they do when they go to a grocery store and wipe down surfaces with disinfectant wipes when they need to touch something,” Eichberger said.

TFCA (Tennessee Fuel & C-Store Association) has provided retail members with guidance for cleaning and sanitizing high-touch areas at the pump, including nozzles, keypads and buttons, touchscreens and monitors, and squeegee handles. C-Stores can utilize a downloadable and printable [“Outdoor Surface Cleaning and Disinfecting”](#) poster, as well as a downloadable and printable [“Hourly Cleaning Checklist”](#) to help retailers keep track of when employees clean and sanitize high-touch areas throughout the day.

TFCA Executive Director, Emily LeRoy, says that, “Pumps are just like other surfaces in public places that will be touched by many different people during a single day. C-stores are working hard to protect their customers with specific cleaning protocols.”

In the middle Tennessee area, Twice Daily’s c-stores have teams working three shifts during high volume periods to wipe down dispensers after each customer use. “Our customers’ health and safety are our highest priority”, says Twice Daily’s retail leadership team.

[Consumer Reports](#) offers advice for consumers who may be concerned about touching high-contact areas at the gas pump, such as using “disposable nitrile or latex gloves” or use paper towels “that are sometimes available at the pump” to grip the handle.

“Cleaning your hands after you’re done seems like the quickest, easiest precaution. But some drivers might want to have disinfectant wipes handy for wiping down the gas pump handle and the payment keypad before pumping,” writes *Consumer Reports*.