

# 5 Best Practices for Operating Ventilation and Portable Cooling Devices during the COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic

Increasing ventilation for your workplace is an effective strategy since outdoor air is highly unlikely to be contaminated by the virus that causes COVID-19. This is essentially a dilution strategy, because increasing outdoor air reduces the overall potential level of contaminated air in your facility. This can be accomplished using permanent equipment such as wall fans, roof ventilators or the temporary use of large mancoolers that are placed in open doors. Here are five of Airmaster's recommendations for safely increasing the amount of fresh air entering your facility and reducing the potential spread of contamination.

## 1. Do NOT Disable Ventilation Equipment.

According to American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers' (ASHRAE) statement regarding the pandemic, ventilation equipment can be used to reduce the contamination by dilution ventilation. Additionally, "unconditioned spaces can cause thermal stress to people that may be directly life threatening and may also lower resistance to infection." Here is ASHRAE's full statement:

**On the recommendation of the ASHRAE Epidemic Task Force, ASHRAE leadership has approved the following two statements regarding transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and the operation of HVAC systems during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 through the air is sufficiently likely that airborne exposure to the virus should be controlled. Changes to building operations, including the operation of heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning systems can reduce airborne exposures.

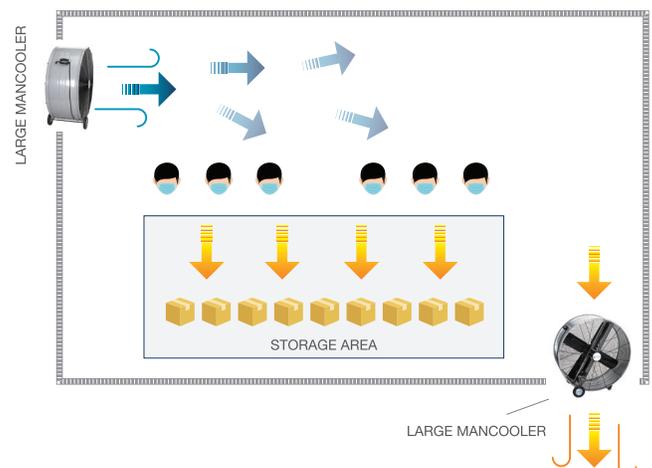
Ventilation and filtration provided by heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning systems can reduce the airborne concentration of SARS-CoV-2 and thus the risk of transmission through the air. Unconditioned spaces can cause thermal stress to people that may be directly life threatening and that may also lower resistance to infection. In general, disabling of heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning systems is not a recommended measure to reduce the transmission of the virus.

## 2. Remember to Use Common Sense when Using Ventilation Equipment.

You wouldn't think to put your car's exhaust in your neighbor's window – working with air movement during the pandemic is somewhat the same! **Workers in these environments should also still rely on the recommended personal protection equipment (PPE) and proper hygiene. Airflow, even when handled properly, is not a substitute for PPE.**

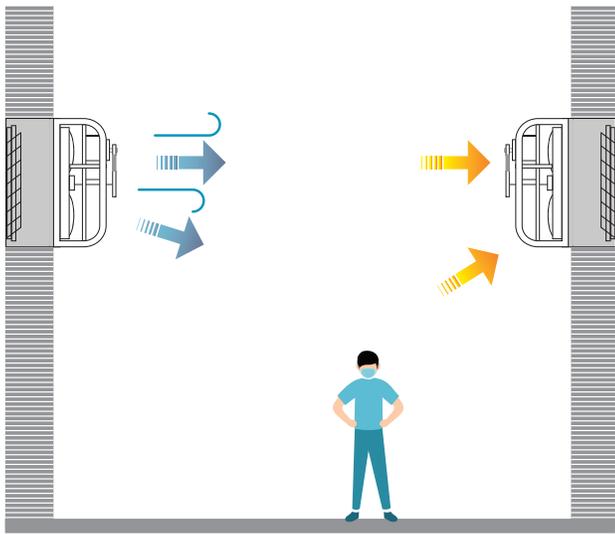
## 3. Air Velocity and Direction Should Be Used in Tandem.

High velocities can invite contamination and increase the dispersion of contamination, so the air direction should always flow from clean areas to areas where contamination is not as critical, such as away from workstations. Try to arrange the airflow pattern in such a manner so that once it passes workstations, it is either immediately exhausted to the exterior or it passes through an unoccupied area where contamination is less of an issue. When portable coolers like large mancoolers, or barrel fans, are used for dilution ventilation, the velocity should be allowed to dissipate with distance before air reaches the workstation, so that the risk of carrying contamination is reduced.



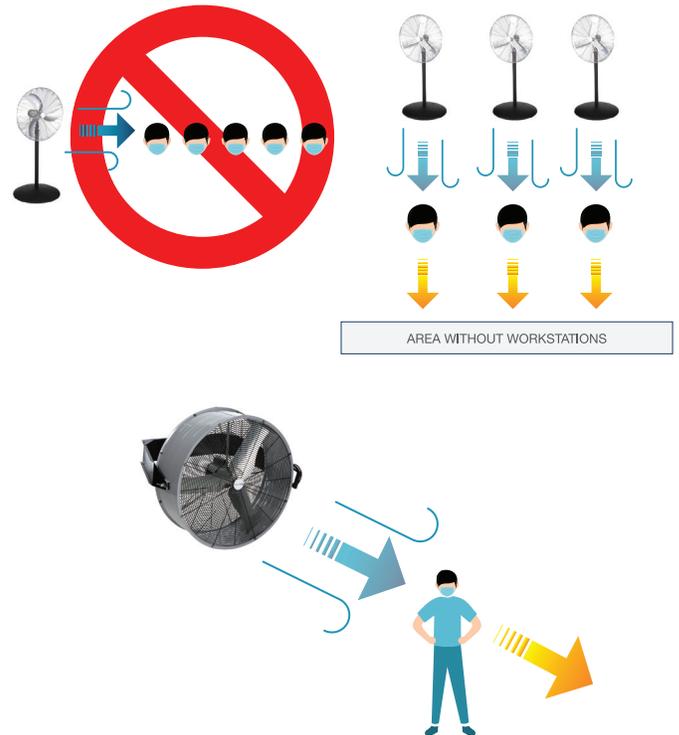
#### 4. Cross Ventilation is an Effective Method Where Personnel are Moving.

For situations where personnel are moving, the most effective method is to “cross ventilate” an area with units on one side of a plant providing supply air and units on the opposite side of the area that are set to exhaust. This will provide effective dilution without high velocities being imposed on workstations. Remember to pay attention to obstructions and heat sources!



#### 5. For Using Air Circulators, Low Speeds and Airflow Direction Must Also be Considered.

For personal cooling equipment, using the lowest speed setting that provides the necessary level of comfort so that velocities are minimized, and the direction of airflow is important. Air circulators should be positioned so that the air flows at a right angle to the line of workstations and that it passes from one workstation to a less clean area. Directing the air from an elevated air circulator downwards past the breathing zone of a worker and continuing towards the floor is equally important.



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