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## Plumbing services to continue through emergency health crisis

The Executive Officer of Master Plumbers ACT, Leigh Watson, said their members would continue to provide plumbing services to the ACT community during this community health emergency.

“The last thing that someone in isolation needs at this time is to live with a blocked toilet or burst water main. Even in normal times, plumbers are essential to community health but at a time like this, the provision of timely and efficient responses to plumbing emergencies is more critical than ever. In the early 20th Century, American plumbers adopted the slogan, ‘*The Plumber Protects the Health of the Nation*’ as a reminder to the public of the importance of sanitation that the plumbing profession provides. And this could not be more relevant now,” she said.

“Of course, plumbers need to take measures at this time to protect the health and safety of both themselves and their customers, but this is nothing new to them - it is what they do. Every day plumbers need to work on sanitary drainage systems that contain faecal matter and a host of dangerous pathogens. They will treat this situation the same as any other safety risk ie identify, control and assess the residual risk and effectiveness of controls.

“With this COVID-19 situation our members are implementing additional hygiene practices and cleaning routines, including wiping down equipment and surfaces worked on with antibacterial supplies and ensuring their staff keep the required physical distance from customers.”

Ms Watson said they are also recommending to members they ask customers to let them know if they may possibly be affected so they can then ensure they take specific precautions with safety equipment such as full shielding Perspex face protection and disposable gloves.

She said the recent panic buying pandemic which stripped the shelves of toilet paper has created its own plumbing situation.

“It is well documented that many people are now resorting to using things like wipes and paper towels which block toilets. Our members are already reporting increased calls to clear blockages. It’s a no brainer that the community would become a very unhealthy place if such toilet blockages were not cleared.”

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MEDIA RELEASE