

Even as the COVID-19 threat diminishes and governments gradually reopen/relaunch their economy, the Canadian Beverage Association (CBA) shares the important public health goal of continuing to minimize/mitigate risk.

Given that beverages are essential to health and well-being, the availability/provision of beverages and the businesses that provide them are deemed an essential service which in turn ensures that Canadians have safe, secure and convenient access to hydration and refreshment.

CBA offers the following practical, sustainable guidance on the safe and responsible use of self-serve beverage dispensing equipment (including self-serve drinks dispensing stations, coolers, vending machines, etc) located in industrial, commercial (such as restaurants, shopping centres, etc) and institutional (e.g. schools, health centres, etc) (collectively: ICI) establishment locations that may enhance customer safety while providing continued convenience.

As provinces begin their phased-in approach for reopening their economies, CBA advises that best practices for use of self-service beverage dispensing equipment in ICI locations during each phase of the reopening should comprise:

Phase I :

Facility operations:

1. Signage on or near self-serve beverage dispensing equipment advising consumers how to properly use the equipment to prevent contamination;
2. In foodservice locations, employee distributes any needed cups, lids, straws, or condiments to customers;
3. For self-serve drinks dispensing stations, customer required to get/use a new cup for any allowable refill;

Food Contact – Cleaning/Disinfecting/Sanitizing:

4. ICI establishment maintains responsibility for regularly cleaning and disinfecting self-serve beverage dispensing equipment, especially customer contact surfaces such as touchscreens and dispensing pushbuttons (disinfecting and sanitizing with Health Canada-approved disinfectants);

Customer Good Hygienic Practices:

5. ICI establishment consider having (if practical) alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol stationed near the self-serve beverage dispensing equipment available for customer use;

Physical Distancing:

6. Use of signs and markings to maintain physical 2-metre distancing for customers accessing the self-serve beverage dispensing equipment.

Phase II :

Facility operations:

1. In foodservice locations, employee distributes any needed cups, lids, straws, or condiments to customers;
2. For self-serve drinks dispensing stations, customer is required to get/use a new cup for any allowable refill;

Food Contact – Cleaning/Disinfecting/Sanitizing:

3. ICI establishment maintains responsibility for regularly cleaning and disinfecting self-serve beverage dispensing equipment, including attention to customer contact surfaces such as touchscreens and dispensing pushbuttons.

Phase III :

1. ICI establishment resumes normal operations, and maintains responsibility for regularly cleaning and disinfecting self-serve beverage dispensing equipment.