Computer Cleaning
Hotspots for germs in the office

Think about all the "public" surfaces you touch on your way to work – railings, door handles, coins and tokens, cash machines, elevator buttons and more. Then, when you get to your destination, washing your hands probably isn't the first thing you do. Instead, you probably grab a cup of coffee and turn on your computer. If you power up before you clean up, all the germs and bacteria that commuted with you are transferred from your hands to your workstation. Ugh! And then, if someone else sits down at your computer, you've got all the germs that tagged along with them, too.

The American Cleaning Institute suggests that before you begin, remember the two golden rules of computer cleaning:

- **Be sure the computer is off** before you clean any part of it – keyboard, monitor screen, mouse, printer or housings.
- **Never spray cleaner directly onto any part of the computer.** Spray it onto a cloth, and then gently wipe.

Keyboard: Clean the keys with a cleaning wipe or a cloth sprayed with an all-purpose cleaner. Make this the first thing you do every morning before you turn on the computer. To remove the dirt, dust and other debris that gets caught between the keys, turn it upside down and shake gently to dislodge the particles. An air duster is also a great aid in removing all these bits and pieces that get lodged inside the keyboard.

Mouse: It's also a good idea to clean the mouse before the start of the workday. Use a cleaning wipe or a cloth sprayed with an all-purpose cleaner.

Monitor: Use a microfiber cloth, either dry or dampened with clean water, or a product specially formulated for computer screens. If you use anything else, you run the risk of damaging the screen. Clean the monitor several times a week, as a dirty monitor can cause eyestrain.

Surrounding surfaces (including computer housings and desktops): Since there are probably coffee and food stains lurking amidst the dust, use an all-purpose cleaner with a disinfectant.

Printer: Consider how often you push the button on the printer and how seldom you think about cleaning it!

Telephone: Even if you're the only one using it, it's still transmission central for germs and bacteria that cause ear, nose and eye infections. Clean it daily using a hard-surface disinfectant cleaner or a wipe.