

ecobug® FAQ's

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Background - understanding

The following are typical questions we have been asked over the years which we have consolidated to help consumers, to understand the ecobug® difference and address some of the confusion in the market place about waterless, nearly waterless urinals, reducing water flush cycles, saving money, reducing blockages and using an effective bacterial solution.

Just click on the highlighted points to refer to other reference material at our web site:

Will ecobug® save us money?

QUITE SIMPLY-YES; Use of ecobug® assists the saving of up to 98% of fresh clean drinking water from being flushed literally down the drain. Reducing the water flush cycle to once every 12 hours achieves this saving. An average urinal even with a sensor system can use over 131,000 litres of water per annum. At an [average UK cost of £360*](#) ecobug® can save £352.80 per urinal per annum.

So will I have to spend a lot on refurbishment?

ABSOLUTELY NOT; we designed ecobug® tough biological urinal caps to be a universally fitting system to accommodate most urinals, even those with open cast drains. However, we do recommend that a flat drain strainer is used so we may apply our enclosed ecobug® Extra Strong Urinal Caps for maximum effectiveness which will incur a minor cost. Please see our guidance for use notes on deploying the ecobug® washroom management system solution for more details about this.

What causes the smell?

The strong ammonia smell that comes from washroom drains and in particular urinals, is the buildup of bad bacteria and uric acid which is only intensified by waterless systems and sense flush systems that prevent waterflow overnight, thus allowing the problem to get worse. ecobug® uses naturally occurring good bacteria which feeds on this buildup to break down blockages and unpleasant odours. By targeting the route of the problem, ecobug® does not temporarily mask nasty smells like regular cleaning products, but eliminates them and keeps on top of the problem.

What causes blockages?

Most of the blockages occur around the u-bend or in the pipework directly behind the urinal before it enters the stack. Badly plumbed pipework can also contribute. Overtime, trace elements like uric acid found in urea in urine build up and start to solidify around the drain pipework of the urinal. If left untreated this in combination with other elements will lead to blockages that worsen over time. ecobug® successfully manages these solids preventing them from caking by keeping them in a semi-emulsified state. A reduced flush cycle, at just one flush every 12 hours using a water restriction system, can then move this buildup down to the stack.

Why is nearly waterless better than waterless?

Whilst waterless systems may save money on water bills initially, the inevitable build up of uric acid and bacteria can be a very expensive problem to fix. The naturally occurring solids in urea, left unchecked, will, over time, form a cake-like substance, which will narrow the flow within the drainpipe. Rather like cholesterol hardening in human arteries causing restricted blood flow, with no water or treatments used to break buildup down, blockages and malodour become a frequent problem. ecobug® manages this buildup by breaking it down, allowing a reduced flush cycle to move it down the pipework to the stack and safely away.

How does ecobug® restrict water flushing?

ecobug®, to efficiently do its job, requires a substantial reduction in flush cycles from the normal average six times an hour to just twice in a twenty-four hour period. This is because frequent water flushes will dilute the ecobug® block within the cap quicker and dilute the biological effect occurring in the urinal drain pipework. If no existing restriction exists in the washroom then ecobug® have their own cost effective solenoid valve system which is either battery or mains operated and can be installed at the mains water inlet to each cistern serving a set of urinals. Please see information on the ecobug® urinal water restrictor solenoid valve.

I already restrict the water flush cycle - Why do I need ecobug®?

Operating a water conservation strategy requires an understanding of cause and effect. We come across many instances of confusion in the market that is the result of lack of understanding and communication. This results in poor performance and ultimate dissatisfaction as the correct procedures have not been followed or carried out and the product is therefore deemed to have failed.

Whether it's a frequent flush, restricted, or waterless system, without using ecobug® bacteria based cleaner, the results will always be the same- blockages and bad smells. This is because the uric acid and bacteria in urine inevitably form a deposit of solids in drainpipes that occur with or without water. The naturally occurring, good bacteria in ecobug® urinal caps break down these solids into a semi-emulsion which is washed away by a nearly waterless system. ecobug® effectively removes the blockages and bad smells but it needs some water, just one flush every 12 hours, to dispose of the waste.

What is ecobug®?

ecobug® is smart dosing for the environment that is sustainable, conserves water and saves you money. All of our products use a particular strain of friendly, naturally occurring, good bacteria to fight bad bacteria and actually benefit the environment. It is our complex formulation using this particular bacterium that gives ecobug® its performance edge over the competition. Whether it's in the kitchen fighting FOG's (fats, oils and greases), or in the washroom addressing urine smells and maintaining good drainage systems, ecobug® creates a healthier and more pleasant environment whilst saving you money.

How does ecobug® differ from other solutions?

The first advantage; the strain of bacteria we use- it is a single strain that is able to recognise its food source and secrete the correct enzyme to break it down. i.e. coming into contact with uric acid/urea it would secrete uricase, if it was protein (cause of some odours and blockages) it will produce protease, and against some food waste it would produce cellulase, fat – lipase etc. Our competitors blocks use multi-strains i.e. one strain breaks down uric acid/urea one for fat etc. What this means is that our bugs work 100% of the time rather than a multi-strain that can only use a proportion of the bugs at a time, meaning ours is far more efficient.

The second advantage; unlike our competitors, our blocks do not contain any insoluble fillers, such as salt, making ours the only 100% soluble block on the market. This stops the build-up of bits of block you see after 6-12 months in the drain. Salt is the biggest offender our competitor's use, as it binds with surfactants in the block creating a paste or gel: this binds scale and debris together causing rapid blockages and bad smells.

The third advantage; our blocks weigh around 100grams and we aim to make them last no more than 1200/1500 uses (2/4 weeks). Some of our competitors blocks weigh (on average) 40grams and try to make them last 6000 uses (3 months). This is counterproductive due to the minute amount of active material going down the urinal.

The fourth advantage; we use additional natural ingredients that break down inorganic materials into their chemical components. Bacteria cannot break down inorganic material such as calcium carbonate and magnesium carbonate AKA limescale. Unlike our competitors' products, which solely rely on bacteria, ecobug® also inhibits the buildup of limescale.

How quickly will we see a difference?

In ambience and appearance of a visit to the washroom the effect of ecobug® is immediate. We use a unique fragrance that smells a bit like cheery bakewell tarts and always receives very positive comments. This in turn increases the positivity of visitor feedback - and given how most people make a judgment on a hotel or restaurant on the quality of its washrooms, it is a worthwhile investment. Clearly other benefits of reduced blockages will only be seen over time. But the fitting of an ecobug® solenoid valve to restrict the flush cycle will also become apparent in reduced water bill expenditure (providing you are metered).

Will ecobug® help our sustainability claims/strategy?

Yes- ecobug® allows for the prevention of clean drinking water being literally flushed down the drain. This is a major claim for sustainability not only to you as the company deploying ecobug but to the local community and its environment by reducing the pressure of waste into our sewerage systems.

Will ecobug® assist our ISO 14001 implementation?

In a word, yes. ISO 14001 is all about responsibly managing your company's impact on the environment. Deployment of ecobug® will have a hugely positive effect on your audit performance assessment criteria.

Will visitors notice the ecobug® difference?

One of the first and most noticeable differences is the pleasant smell the washroom will exude from the ecobug® caps and High Performance Washroom Cleaner. Commented on positively by so many, is the cherry bakewell aroma, which is used, in the High Performance Washroom Cleaner and the Caps. This fresh scent along with its powerful but natural cleaning agents provides an instant change in washroom ambience.

Will this seriously help the environment?

This is an important part of what ecobug® does. Our proprietary owned strains of good bacteria, (or to give them their more technical name - microbial, antimicrobial, plant extract and enzyme based ecological products) are smart, good bugs that ensure clean, blockage free drains in everyday situations from commercial kitchens and washrooms to large utility operations. ecobug® actually has a beneficial effect on the receiving effluent treatment plant, unlike chemicals and bleaches – so you will be doing your bit to help the environment.

Do you know your washroom environment?

ecobug® have for over 25 years been providing bacterial solutions to pollution with our grounding in UK utility and government provisions. Over the years major companies who have decided to investigate use of bacterial products to manage washroom drains have put us into extensive test situations, up against alternative solutions. These include waterless urinals and alternative bacterial blocks in various cartridge or cap enclosures. ecobug® has welcomed these challenges to demonstrate how it out performs all others.

Will our cleaners have to be specially trained?

Yes- but this is a simple process in which we will provide an easy to brief set of instructions and protocols for the cleaning regime.

How long will ecobug® last?

An ecobug® cap will last on average from 2-4 weeks dependent on usage of the urinal. It is also important to know that in a bank of urinals there will always be those which are used more frequently, (such as those furthest from the door), so it is important to brief cleaning staff to check the cap when cleaning around the urinal with the ecobug® High Performance Washroom Cleaner.

What does water cost?

Water utility companies charge for both supply and wastewater at a rate per cubic metre (1 cubic meter = 1,000 litres). The UK average is around *£2.75 a cubic metre, but it is a lot higher on the continent. On the macro scale global weather changes and worldwide demand will change the value we place upon water. "Water is the oil of the 21st century." quote by Andrew Liveris, CEO of DOW Chemical Company (quoted in The Economist magazine). Using ecobug® is a serious step towards conserving water and saving money which is becoming increasingly important year on year in every industry.

How can I calculate how much ecobug® will save me?

Please ask for our calculator to estimate the total water saving you may have in your business. This can be publicised as a sustainability valid claim, please see our ecobug® washroom ads for placing above the urinal.

Where can I buy ecobug®?

ecobug® is available throughout the world through appointed distributors. All international sales enquiries should be directed through our partner ecobug® International/CSE in Austria or for the UK via ecobug/APH Environmental. Please see [contact us tab at www.ecobug.com](http://www.ecobug.com/contact-us-tab) - <http://www.ecobug.com/contact-eco-bug.php>.