



# American Restroom Association

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**America's Advocate for Clean, Safe, Well-Designed Public Restrooms**

*An independent, 501(c)(3) nonprofit founded in 2004 - EIN # 20-3581202.*

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## ARA eZine

**September 2020**

Issue #1 • What We Are Here For • ARA In the News  
What YOU Said • Donate/Join • Innovation Spotlight • Restroom Champions

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### Welcome to the Inaugural Issue of the ARA's monthly eZine!

At the American Restroom Association, we are passionate about improving the experience of public restrooms in the United States. If you are receiving this newsletter, then we believe that you are, too! We all know that we are inundated with things that fill our inbox. Our promise is that we will do our best to keep our new eZine a quick read that gives you a fast scan of information that is new and valuable, and provides links for a deeper dive, should you be interested. Be sure to forward on to like-minded individuals and [let us know](#) what you think!



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### What We Are Here For

"It's about time that the U.S. and Canada caught up with the rest of the world," stated Steven Soifer, professor of social work, co-founder, and President of the American Restroom Association. "Many countries, especially in Asia, have associations sponsoring better, cleaner toilets, and yet North America has never had such a group," said Soifer.

Although Dr. Soifer said those words upon the founding of the ARA in 2004, the mission has stayed the same - and is more important than ever in a time of

COVID and evolving cultural awareness of individual needs. The ARA was built to advocate for improved, modern restroom design and improved availability for the general public and in institutions like schools. Its goal is to change restroom design and availability in the US and to provide more privacy, comfort, and sanitation by keeping abreast of the newest technology and design for toilets/restrooms. With a plethora of innovations coming to market, the ARA will serve as a clearing house for companies and individuals promoting these products and designs and to develop lines of communication with municipal leaders, building managers, architects, builders, manufacturers, vendors and other groups which can change restroom design. [Send us your ideas for features!](#)

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### ARA in the News: CBS Sunday Morning

ARA VP, Kathryn Anthony, was featured in a thought-provoking story on "CBS Sunday Morning" on July 26. If there can be a silver lining to the pandemic, it could be that it has put a spotlight on what we have always championed: better public restrooms. Click the graphic to see the story in its entirety. (5 min video) "As COVID becomes a fixture of life, new thought is being given to another fixture – the public restroom – and how to maintain social distancing safely in the most private of public places. Richard Schlesinger reports. . ."



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### What You Said . . .

Based on the emails that flooded our inbox after the CBS Sunday Morning story, these are the topics you care about . . .



1. Toilet Paper Dispensers Too High! [*ed. note: by far the most widely shared comment*]
2. Availability of "employee only" restrooms for those with a medical need
  - why haven't more states adopted "Ally's Law" and for those that do, why is the fine for non-compliance barely a slap on the wrist?
3. The "how to get in and out of the stall without touching the door/lock" problem.
4. Closure of needed restrooms due to COVID-19 - "Where are we supposed to go?"
5. The need for automatic door opening devices for not only cleanliness, but easier access for persons with disabilities.
6. Frustration with the standard "US"-design restroom stalls with gapped partitions that place a priority on easy mopping over privacy.
7. As the US has abdicated its governmental responsibilities for public restrooms, how to ensure that businesses pick up the slack while recognizing the need of those marginalized by society.
8. As a society, how can we address the needs of the delivery infrastructure - especially at a time when many businesses were closed? Where are our FedEx, UPS, Door Dasher, Pest Control, and other road warrior

friends supposed to go?

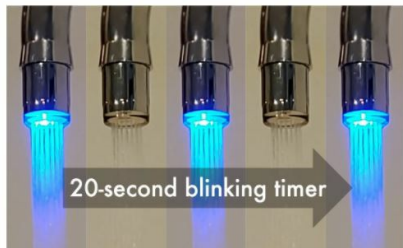
9. Dear Men designers: women have needs that you don't, so please don't forget about us.
10. How can I become a member of the ARA?[see below . . .]



### Donate & Join Today!

In many respects, the American Restroom Association is like a 16-year-old "start up." Through a generous grant from its sibling nonprofit, the [International Paruresis Association](#), the ARA is embarking on an ambitious growth plan for 2021. In motion even before COVID-19, the ARA is poised to expand the voice of Americans in demanding access to clean, safe, and well-designed public restrooms. Won't you join us on this quest with a membership gift of at least \$50? Click the button below to make your gift through our official giving portal, Network for Good.

Donate Now



### Innovation Spotlight - SinkBlink20

Does innovation drive change or does change drive innovation? We'll use this space each month to share at least one of the innovative solutions coming to market to enhance the restroom experience. In advance of [World](#)

[Handwashing Day](#) on October 15, 2020, we're spotlighting an innovation called, "SinkBlink20."

Now more than ever, handwashing is at the forefront of safety and protection in our communities. Creating awareness to hand hygiene shortfalls and providing a solution to help solve this problem, is important. Studies have shown that **the average handwashing session is 7 seconds** even though the CDC recommends a minimum of 20 seconds. This time period performs two functions, first the scrubbing action lifts the germs from our hands, second the lathered soap needs time to penetrate and destroy the cells. To increase handwashing time, visual cues and handwashing timers **improve the average handwashing time to 16 seconds** and proper scrubbing is more likely to occur.

To help solve this problem, the SinkBlink20 was created to add convenience and fun to handwashing accountability. It's powered by the flow of water - no batteries needed. Unscrew the faucet's aerator and screw on the device. Once the water is turned on it begins to blink. After 20 seconds the light will turn solid, informing the hand washer that they have scrubbed for enough time.

The SinkBlink20 was made available in June 2020 and has already been installed in more than 20 states and 5 countries. It's modifying handwashing

behavior in schools, restaurants, office buildings, and medical facilities. Visit their [website](#) to see it in action.

*Please note: The ARA makes no endorsement, representation, or warranty of any service or product listed. All content is strictly offered in an informational capacity and readers are strongly urged to conduct their own evaluations of each product or service relative to their own goals. No direct compensation was provided for placement of this article. Click the graphic to visit the manufacturer's site.*



GLOBAL HANDWASHING DAY

OCTOBER 15

## Restroom Champions

The Good News!: The ARA is not alone in our passion for addressing the needs that we all have as human beings. Here are a few more fantastic groups that are doing the heavy lifting of advocacy and evangelizing for change. Check them out and get involved! We'll be featuring these organizations and others like them in future issues.



# Stalled!

See what's happening and follow the ARA on our social sites:



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***About American Restroom Association (ARA):*** a nonprofit founded in 2004, ARA advocates for the availability of clean, safe, and well-designed public restrooms. Accomplishments include successfully advocating for enforcement of and revisions to the International Plumbing Code, congressional testimony on gender equity in public restrooms in US Federal Buildings, and representing the USA in educating international audiences at Summits and Conferences of the World Toilet Organization (WTO). ARA brings together an independent and multidisciplinary team from architecture, engineering, education, academia, and social work. Learn more at <https://americanrestroom.org/>.

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