

Squeaky Clean

A copper mouse could provide the ultimate virus protection for your PC.

Brussels, October the 27th 2009: A copper mouse could help to reduce the spread of germs at home, in schools and in the workplace according to metallurgist Mark Tur, who has just taken delivery of the first prototype.



Prototype 'copper mouse'

"80% of infections are spread by touch, and it is well documented that germs can live on hard surfaces for hours, days and even months," explains Mark.

The copper mouse is made from the same spray-coated copper-composite material as the toilet seats installed in the Selly Oak Hospital clinical trial, which demonstrated a 90-100% reduction in germs compared to a standard plastic toilet seat on a busy medical ward.

Mark is delighted with the new mouse, saying: *"Infection control nurses recently voted keyboards as being one of the top three contaminated surfaces, and these have certainly been reported to harbour nasty bugs like E. coli, Staphylococcus aureus and Norovirus. It stands to reason that computer mice will be heavily contaminated, too. Just think of how many things you touch before you use your PC, and imagine what might be on your fingers. Scrupulous hand hygiene could help to reduce the contamination on these surfaces in the first place, and kill germs picked up from them, but these practices require constant self-discipline. Copper can help by working away in the background, killing germs 24/7."*

Manufacturers have been busy developing hygienic products made from copper (including brass and bronze which contain copper, too) to help hospitals tackle infections. This mouse is one of the most recent. Copper is a broad spectrum antimicrobial, which means that bacteria, viruses and fungi simply cannot survive on it under normal office conditions. With the ever-present threat of Swine Flu and community MRSA, hygiene in the home, schools and the workplace cannot be ignored.

About the ECI (European Copper Institute):

The European Copper Institute (ECI) is a joint venture between the world's mining companies (represented by the International Copper Association, Ltd) and the European copper industry. Its mission is to promote copper's benefits to modern society across Europe through its headquarters in Brussels and its network of eleven national Copper Development Associations.

ECI's website: www.eurocopper.org

Press contact: Irina Dumitrescu, Communications Manager; Tel. +32 2 777 70 82; irid@eurocopper.org