

Ushio launches world's 1st UV lamp that can safely kill coronavirus

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Photo: PR Times

Major Japanese light equipment maker Ushio Inc has recently launched an ultraviolet lamp that can kill the coronavirus without harming human health -- the first of its kind in the world.

The Care 222 UV lamp, which Ushio developed together with Columbia University, is expected to be used for disinfection at occupied spaces where people keep coming in and out and the risk of contracting the deadly

virus runs high, such as buses, trains, elevators and offices, the company said.

UV lamps have been widely used as an effective means of sterilization notably in the medical and food-processing industries. But conventional UV rays cannot be used in spaces where there are people as they cause skin cancer and eye problems.

Ushio's new lamp, however, emits the UV rays with a wavelength of 222 nanometers, as opposed to the conventional 254-nanometer wavelength, making them lethal to germs but benign to humans.

At this particular wavelength, the firm said, UV rays cannot infiltrate the surface of the skin nor the eyes to bring about cancer-causing genetic defects and other damage.

The Care 222, when emitted from a ceiling, inactivates 99 percent of viruses and bacteria in the air and up to a 3-square-meter surface of objects some 2.5 meters away from the lamp, in six to seven minutes.

A recent third-party study by Hiroshima University confirmed the 222-nanometer UV rays are effective in killing the new coronavirus, Ushio said.

The 1.2-kilogram Care 222 emitting device comes in about the size of a hardcover book and with a price tag of 300,000 yen.

The company said it only accepts orders from medical institutions for the moment but will serve other customers once production catches up with demand.

Ushio has also teamed up with Toshiba Lighting and Technology Corp, a subsidiary of Toshiba Corp, to develop general-purpose lamps with Care 222 emitters installed to cater to a broad range of situations. The companies aim to release such products next January.

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