

# Guano Removal In London

CASE STUDY

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London, United Kingdom



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### THE CHALLENGE

Bird droppings (also called guano) are not only unsightly but also highly acidic in nature and can also be dangerous to humans since they can cause diseases such as histoplasmosis and cryptococcosis. In this case, guano was an issue for a contract manager who needed to perform works on mechanical and electrical (M&E) equipment that was covered in guano.

Not only was the guano a health risk for the workers, but guano damage also had the potential to affect the M&E equipment which included air conditioning and ventilation systems. With so much guano present, this equipment could have sucked particles of the bird droppings into the building itself, affecting the air quality and causing an indoor health risk. The challenge for Ideal was to clean all of the M&E equipment where it was located in a very difficult to access lightwell space, and to perform the clean rapidly.



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### THE IDEAL SOLUTION

When the contracts manager contacted Ideal for help, it was due to works being required on the M&E equipment, which was being prevented by the guano issue. Due to the request for rapid guano removal and cleaning – the client wished a turnaround within 48 hours – and complications around Covid-19 restrictions, we did not perform our usual site inspection.

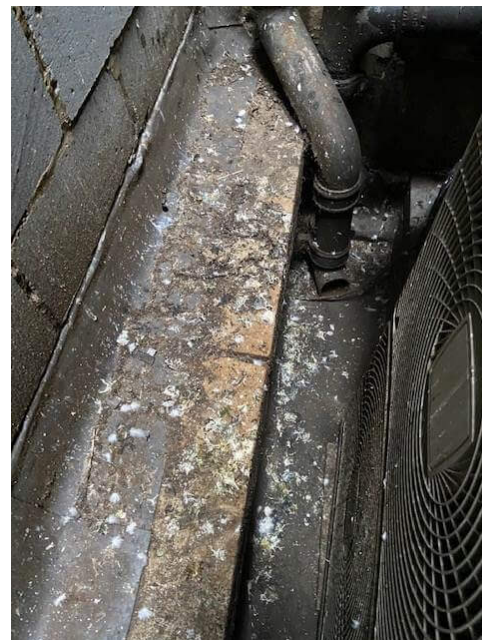
Instead, our operations department coordinated with the contract manager and we were able to survey the location and equipment via Skype video calls in order to prepare for the guano clean up in London.

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The M&E equipment was in a lightwell – an unroofed external space within the building which allowed light and air inside, and which also caused the problem of bird droppings. From the video, the Ideal Response team could see that access was difficult, with limited space to operate. Therefore we arrived with the correct PPE (including nitrile gloves, FFP3 half face masks and safety glasses), and ladders to gain access to the equipment and clean correctly and thoroughly.

After turning off and isolating all air conditioning units, the first phase was to fully clean the M&E equipment, paying care to not affect the mechanics or electrics of the equipment. For the bird dropping removal, we used specialist chemicals that removed all traces of bird droppings and also completely sanitised the area and equipment. Our client was so impressed with our team for its very thorough and professional job, that they requested the team should return for a second phase of cleaning. The M&E equipment was removed, which allowed our team to clean the surrounding areas (the floor beneath the equipment and surrounding walls).



Completing the guano removal in London in two stages gave an excellent result, which led the client to confirm that for all future cleaning works they would request the services of Ideal Response.

## THE TECHNICAL BIT

Since guano may contain various diseases that can be harmful to humans who encounter it, we approached guano removal in London with a tried and tested process of cleaning, which is both safe and effective. For example, we never use high-pressure washers to clean guano, since this will create airborne contaminated droplets.

Our guano cleaning procedure is as follows:

1. We first spray the guano with a diluted citrus-based cleaner and degreaser, which is safe, powerful and biodegradable.



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2. Once the guano is dampened down enough to prevent any airborne particles being created, we begin to remove it. We do this using scrapers, wire brushes, and soft brushes to remove the guano onto a hand spade.

4. The waste is then placed into rubble bags that have been double bagged and identified as hazardous waste. These are cable tied once waste removal is completed.

5. Depending on the amount of guano present, the length of time it's taking to remove it, and the temperature we're working in, further respraying of cleaner and degreaser may be required throughout the cleaning process.

6. Once all the guano has been removed and placed into the rubble bags, we spray the area down using a broad-spectrum disinfectant that is effective against micro-organisms and which resists further microbial growth.

7. Operatives remove all plastic sheeting used in the clean up and their disposable PPE. These materials are double bagged and cable tied. All waste bags are then sprayed down with a broad-spectrum disinfectant and left to dry before removal for safe disposal off-site.

8. Although all of our operatives wear full PPE suits and gloves, they are instructed to thoroughly wash their hand and arms due to dangers of guano.

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