

Public Health Recommendations for Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection of Public Facilities

This document supports owners and operators of public facilities with general cleaning and disinfection and outbreak considerations for preventing illness spread, including gastrointestinal illnesses, COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses. Healthcare facilities and other facilities with specific cleaning and disinfecting guidelines shall follow facility-specific procedures.

Note: For food preparation areas, environmental cleaners and sanitizers designed for these specific settings continue to be appropriate for their intended uses.

General Cleaning and Disinfecting

- In common areas, complete daily cleaning and disinfection of surfaces. Pay particular attention to doorknobs, light switches, staff rooms, desktops, washrooms and other high-touch surfaces.
- For high-traffic areas, increase the frequencies of cleaning and disinfection.
- To reduce the spreading of microorganisms, use a “wipe twice” procedure to clean and disinfect surfaces. First, wipe surfaces thoroughly to clean visibly soiled material, then wipe again with a clean cloth saturated with disinfectant to disinfect).
- Operators may use commercially available low-level disinfectants or prepare a low-level disinfectant onsite. Commercial low-level disinfectants must have a Drug Identification Number (DIN) and a manufacturer’s disinfection statement. Users should follow the manufacturer’s dilution and safety instructions when preparing disinfecting solutions.
 - Alternatively, a 100 ppm bleach water solution of 2 ml (½ teaspoon) of unscented household bleach to 1000 ml (4 cups) of water is also effective. Bleach does not have a DIN.
- Disinfectant concentrations must be tested regularly with test papers or other testing equipment unless it is premixed by the manufacturer and marked with an expiry date. Disinfectants must be used following the manufacturer’s instructions and may require a rinse step.

Cleaning refers to using soap or detergent to remove visible dirt, grime and impurities. Cleaning does not kill germs but helps remove them from the surface.

Disinfecting refers to using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces.

Always use a wipe twice procedure.

Cleaning and Disinfecting During an Outbreak

- If a facility has a cluster of illnesses or an outbreak, increase the cleaning and disinfection frequencies in all areas. Operators should prioritize high-traffic areas and use an appropriate disinfectant on surfaces in common areas and high-touch surfaces.
- AHS may recommend specific disinfectants based on the type of outbreak. Please adhere to any additional recommendations provided by Public Health at that time.

Respiratory Outbreaks

Disinfectants must have a DIN and a broad-spectrum virucidal claim OR a virucidal claim against non-enveloped viruses or coronaviruses. Consider products approved by Health Canada:

- Approved: (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19.html>).
- Interim Approval: (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/products-accepted-under-interim-measure.html>).

Alternatively, operators can create a 1000 ppm bleach solution by mixing 20 ml (4 teaspoons) of unscented household bleach with 1000 ml (4 cups) of water. To effectively kill viruses, a surface should remain wet with the bleach water solution for at least one minute. Food contact surfaces or toys require a rinse with clean water.

Gastrointestinal Outbreaks

Disinfectants must have a DIN and a specific claim against norovirus, feline calicivirus or murine norovirus. Alternatively, a 1000 ppm bleach solution may be used (see the instructions above).

Prevention

- [Wash your hands often and well](#)
- Avoid touching your face, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, particularly avoiding bodily fluids such as cough/sneeze droplets, secretions, vomit or feces
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched
- Stay at home and away from others if you are feeling ill
- Consider wearing a mask when experiencing respiratory symptoms
- [When sick, cover your cough and sneezes and then wash your hands](#)

References

Alberta Health Services Infection Prevention and Control

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Health Canada: Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Contact us at 1-833-476-4743 or [submit a request online at ahs.ca/eph](#).

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