

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

FAQS

DISINFECTANTS

APRIL 2020

How To Properly Disinfect Surfaces For COVID-19

The health and safety of our employees and customers is of the utmost importance to us as the world responds to the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic. We are in the midst of an unprecedented global event that has dramatically changed our day-to-day lives and will continue to do so for the immediate future. At the same time, we are taking precautions to ensure that our staff are at home and safe with their families, while also being able to support the needs of our customers. As part of our response efforts, we have partnered with Dr. David Hamer, a professor at the Boston University Schools of Public Health and Medicine and a board-certified specialist in infectious diseases with more than 30 years of experience. Included below are several Frequently Asked Questions and safety tips that will help in disinfecting surfaces and objects from COVID-19.

How to prevent the spread of COVID-19?

- The best action to take is to stay home and avoid public gatherings. Social distancing is key to slowing and stopping the spread of COVID-19. There is a risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19 in a public place.
- Other recommendations include:
 - Regularly wash hands for 20-30 seconds with water and soap, or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
 - Sneezing and coughing into a tissue;
 - Properly disposing of the tissue;
 - Clean all surface areas that have regular contact from people;
 - Avoid public transportation; and
 - Wear a face mask if sick.

How long can COVID-19 remain on surfaces?

- Depending on the type of surface – stainless steel or plastic versus cardboard – the virus can last for up to 72 hours. In many cases, the virus will not last more than a day, and may only survive a few hours.
- There is no current information available on how long the virus survives on clothing.

- Commonly touched surfaces require regular cleansing as frequently as is practical. Surfaces include phones, keyboards, countertops, doorknobs, tables, handrails, bathroom fixtures and toilets, and many more.
- Dispense of the packaging and wash your hands after receiving food or other home deliveries.

What's the best way to disinfect surfaces or commonly touched objects from COVID-19?

- Commonly touched or used surfaces and objects should be cleaned with soap and water, or cleaning detergent and water, before a disinfectant, such as bleach, is used.
- There are several different types of disinfectants available that will clean surfaces, but household bleach or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol can be used to sterilize surfaces.
- Use disposable gloves when using disinfectants. Reusable gloves can be used, but they should be cleaned after each use and used only for cleaning purposes.
- It is also important to read the labels and ensure appropriate ventilation if planning to use any disinfectants.

How quickly will a disinfectant work on killing COVID-19?

- Disinfectant solutions, such as 70% ethanol or sodium hypochlorite, can stop the virus within one minute of application to the surface or object.

Can bleach be used to clean surfaces and objects?

- Yes, bleach is an effective disinfectant that can help stop the spread of COVID-19.
- However, any bleach cleaning solution should be diluted. The recommend dilution is:
 - Five tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water or four teaspoons bleach per quart of water.

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What other household products will help disinfect surfaces from COVID-19?

There is a wide range of products that will work to effectively clean and disinfect surfaces. For a full list, visit the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) online list of products that can be used against COVID-19.

- www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2
- For each product available or want to purchase, check if its EPA registration number is included on the list. If it is, it's a match and the product can be used against the virus.
- Each recommended product could be sold under a variety of brand names, but if they have the same EPA registration number, they are the same product.

How does the EPA know that a product works to stop the spread of the virus?

- Since the virus that causes COVID-19 is new, testing disinfectants against the virus is only in early stages. Often times with new viruses, pathogens are not readily available for laboratory testing.
- However, the products listed to be effective against COVID-19 is based on:
 - Demonstrated efficacy against a harder-to-kill virus;
 - Qualified for the emerging viral pathogens claim; or
 - Demonstrated efficacy against other similar human coronaviruses.

Should towels and gloves be thrown away after cleaning?

- Yes. It is recommended that any materials, such as papers, towels and gloves be thrown away after use of for cleaning.
- Make sure to be careful in disposing of these products as not to expose the chemicals to skin.