



# Cleaning & Disinfecting Indoor Spaces

Guidance  
Document

Environmental & Occupational Health Assessment Program • October 2014

During the flu season or during an infectious disease outbreak, there may be a need or desire to do some extra cleaning and disinfecting of indoor spaces. This document will provide information about how to do this safely and properly.

## Things to Know About Disinfectants

**Any product** that makes public health claims like “kills household germs” or kills microorganisms (bacteria, fungi, viruses) **must be registered by EPA** and display the following information on the label:

- ◆ EPA registration number
- ◆ The names of the microorganisms it is designed to kill
- ◆ How the product should be used, including types of surfaces
- ◆ How long the product must be left on the surface in order to work (contact time or dwell time)
- ◆ Certain precautionary statements regarding safety and health

### **Important Fact:**

Disinfectants are meant to kill microorganisms. They are NOT designed to clean dirt, grime, and other organic matter off of surfaces.

Disinfectants do not work well if used on dirty surfaces. This is why most disinfectants say on the label that you should clean first before using them.

### **To Clean Large Surfaces Like Walls, Floors, Lockers, etc.**

Use an all-purpose cleaner that handles dirt and grime. It is not necessary for it to kill microorganisms. Detergents or soap and water are fine to use for cleaning.

The physical act of scrubbing or wiping removes a large percentage of microorganisms found on surfaces.

### **To Disinfect:**

Reserve disinfectants for ‘high touch’ areas like door knobs, light switches, toilet flush handles, sink faucet handles- anything that many people touch.

### **Choose a disinfectant that satisfies all of the requirements below:**

- ◆ The EPA registration no. must be on the label and must include types of sites where it can be used.
- ◆ The label must list specific microorganisms that this product is effective against. Choose a product that will be effective against specific microorganisms of interest.

- Choose the least toxic product by avoiding these signal words on the label: Danger, Warning, or Caution. Hydrogen peroxide based disinfectants are desirable because many formulations do not contain these signal words, and do not produce irritating vapors or odors.

**Follow Label Directions for Contact Time**

Be sure to leave the disinfectant on the surface for the amount of time specified on the label (contact time or dwell time) to be sure it works.

To check a product label to be sure all of these requirements are satisfied, go to this website:

<http://pims.psur.cornell.edu/ProductName.php>

Type in a product name, search, then go to the far right and click on NYS to get a picture of the actual label. You can see the EPA reg no., list of microbes, contact time, and other information.

See example below.

DISINFECTANT NAME  
(example)

Disinfectant and Cleaner  
  
Ready to Use

Active Ingredients: Hydrogen Peroxide 1.0%  
Other Ingredients: 99%  
TOTAL: 100%  
KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN

→ EPA REG. No: 12345-1-54321  
EPA Est No. 8888-US-01

Net Contents: 1 Gallon

**Virucidal (5 minutes)**

- Avian Influenza (A)
- Influenza (A)-Hong Kong\*
- Parainfluenza
- Hepatitis B (HBV)
- Hepatitis C (HCV)
- HIV-1 (AIDS)
- Adenovirus
- Rotavirus
- Canine Parvovirus
- Poliovirus Type 1
- Norovirus (Feline Calicivirus)
- Rhinovirus

\* This product has demonstrated effectiveness against Influenza Type A2 (Hong Kong) and is expected to inactivate all Influenza A viruses including Pandemic 2009 H1N1. Virucidal activity was determined by the efficacy test methods for virucidal agents intended for inanimate environmental surfaces

## Specific advice about disinfecting indoor spaces for Enterovirus D68 and Ebola Virus from the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

There are no disinfectants approved for use against Enterovirus D68 or Ebola virus at this time, because manufacturers do not have these viruses to perform the efficacy tests required for EPA registration. CDC and EPA recommend using disinfectants effective against viruses in the same classes. Therefore, choose:

**EPA-registered hospital disinfectants with label claims against non-enveloped viruses** (e.g., **norovirus**, rotavirus, adenovirus, poliovirus), which are broadly antiviral and capable of inactivating both enveloped and non-enveloped viruses.

### Further Specific Disinfection Information:

#### Enterovirus D68:

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/han/han00369.asp>

#### Ebola Virus:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/environmental-infection-control-in-hospitals.html>

## Cleaning Strategies for Spills of Blood and Body Substances

Strategies for cleaning and disinfecting blood, vomit, feces, and other body secretions found on environmental surfaces will differ based on how much material needs to be cleaned up, and the type of setting in which the incident occurs. In general, the CDC recommends the following:

1. Put on disposable gloves. Respiratory protection (N-95 respirator) should be worn if the cleaning process is expected to generate aerosols.
2. Remove visible matter (blood, vomit, feces, etc.)

with absorbent materials like disposable paper towels. Discard into leak-proof containers (zip-lock bags will work).

3. Clean area with detergent or commercial all-purpose cleaning agent, following directions on the label.
4. Disinfect the surface using **an EPA - registered hospital disinfectant effective against Norovirus**. Leave the product in place for the amount of time listed on the label. Some labels may include longer contact times for blood and body fluids.
5. Alternatively, after removing the human material, then using an all-purpose cleanser, household bleach may be used to disinfect the area. Mix 1 part bleach + 9 parts water into a clean container. **DO NOT USE STRAIGHT BLEACH—more is not better, it can be harmful.** Try to use fresh bleach. **Leave this solution in place for at least 10 minutes.**

### CT DPH Contacts:

#### Infectious Disease Questions:

Epidemiology Program: 860-509-7994

#### Cleaning & Disinfection Questions:

Environmental & Occupational Health Assessment Program: 860-509-7740

#### Food Service Facility Questions:

Food Protection Program: 860-509-7297

(For specific information about regulations for food service areas and management of facilities involved in a foodborne disease outbreaks)

#### Please note:

School guidance is provided in a separate document, [Cleaning Schools Effectively, The Safe and Healthy Way: Guidance for Superintendents and Facility Managers](#).

Connecticut Department of Public Health  
Environmental & Occupational Health Assessment Program

860-509-7740 • <http://www.ct.gov/dph/ieq>

