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Combating Covid-19 with Cleaning Businesses & Homeowners

Combating Covid-19 will take a multifaceted approach from medical breakthroughs with testing and treatments, to social distancing, as well as improvements in hygiene and cleaning. Most of us can offer very little to scientific research as we have recently learned about the benefits of social distancing and properly washing our hands for 20-30 seconds. However, we can discuss the cleaning aspects for both businesses/ commercial space, as well as the average homeowners trying to clean their house type with everyone staying home.

To start, we all know cleaning involves more than water. It involves cleaning products designed to kill bacteria and viruses. Many disinfectants kill 99% of “germs” and are great products when used correctly. Unfortunately to use correctly, many of these products have a dwell time of 10 minutes or longer. What is dwell time? **Dwell time (or contact time)**, refers to the amount of **time** that a disinfecting product needs to sit (or **dwell**) on a surface in order to kill organisms. Just spraying and wiping doesn’t give the chemical the time it needs to kill 99% of bacteria.

I know some of you are probably thinking “Crap, I have never given a 10 min dwell time.” That’s ok. What’s important is that you know what is needed to achieve your desire of cleanliness. If something absolutely needs to be disinfected, follow the product label directions for use. For most things, you are probably ok. I am a big believer in any cleaning is better than nothing. This statement rings true now with Covid-19 and for anyone with a 10 year old boy. :) It’s important to know the difference between cleaning and disinfecting, and that you are aware that surfaces may not be 99% disinfected. And like I tell my 10 year old son, do your best. That’s all we can ask of anyone.

It is very important to familiarize yourself with the key elements of any product you are using. *“It is a violation of Federal law to use this product in a manner inconsistent with its labeling.”* Know your products. Cleaning, when done properly, is one of the best ways to protect your business and home from the spread of bacteria and viruses. Knowing what to do and when to call for the trained professionals are also key. Many hire cleaners to our homes and businesses and just assume they are doing everything correctly. Hey...it looks clean. Remember, looking and being clean are often different. A little education can go a long way when it comes to cleaning. One of my pet peeves is HVAC vents. They transport air throughout your home. I recommend, at least monthly, remove vent cover and vacuuming as far a vacuum hose will reach, this includes ceiling returns as well. I recommend a full home duct cleaning every 12-18 months if you have pets and every 2-3 years if you have a pet-free home.

Understanding product labels. There are 6 key parts of products labels.

1. Safety – for yourself and others
 2. Protection – of the surface(s) you’re cleaning and your working environment
 3. Using the correct amount of chemical to get the job done – no more, no less
 4. Proper application of the chemical you’re using
 5. In the case of disinfectants and sanitizers, understanding which germs the product kills, and **what dwell times are needed for effectiveness**
 6. Understanding First Aid procedures in case of an accident
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Some Common Household cleaning products- How to Use

Important: Neither SC Companies nor myself, are endorsing any product. These labels from a few random common household cleaning products. There are plenty of great products on the market.

Windex® Advanced Glass & Multi-Surface Cleaner 32oz

When used as directed, kills:

‡Staphylococcus aureus (Staph), Salmonella enterica (Salmonella), Pseudomonas aeruginosa (Pseudomonas), Streptococcus pyogenes (Strep), Rhinovirus Type 37 (common cold), Influenza A2/Hong Kong (H3N2) (flu) (virus)

^Rhinovirus Type 37 (common cold), Influenza A2/Hong Kong (H3N2), Influenza B

†Staphylococcus aureus (Staph), Enterobacter aerogenes (Enterobacter), Escherichia coli (E. coli), Salmonella enterica (Salmonella), Campylobacter jejuni, and Listeria monocytogenes (Listeria), Streptococcus pyogenes (Strep).

HOW TO USE

To clean:

Step 1: Spray surface.

Step 2: Wipe with a dry paper towel or lint-free cloth.

To sanitize hard non-porous surface:

Step 1: Pre-clean heavily soiled areas.

Step 2: Spray surface until thoroughly wet.

Step 3: Let stand for 10 minutes.

Step 4: Wipe with a dry paper towel or lint-free cloth.

Note: Do not use on glasses, utensils or dishes. All food contact surfaces such as appliances and kitchen countertops must be rinsed with water.

It is a violation of Federal Law to use this product in a manner inconsistent with its labeling.

Source: <https://www.windex.com/en-us/products/disinfectant-cleaner-multi-surface>

Clorox® Disinfecting Wipes, Bleach Free Cleaning Wipes – Orange Fusion®, 35 Count (Packaging May Vary)

00044600016290

Usage Instructions

- To clean and remove allergens: Wipe surface clean with this product. Let air dry.
- To disinfect and deodorize hard, nonporous surfaces: Wipe surface; use enough wipes for treated surface to remain visibly wet for 4 minutes. Let surface dry.
- For highly soiled surfaces, clean excess dirt first. For surfaces that may come in contact with food, a potable water rinse is required.
- This product is not for use on dishes, glassware or eating utensils.
- Not for cleaning or sanitizing skin.
- Do not use as a diaper wipe or for personal cleansing.
- Clorox Disinfecting Wipes will not harm most surfaces including acrylic, sealed fiberglass, sealed granite and finished hardwood.
- Not recommended for use on unpainted wood and unfurnished, unsealed, waxed, oiled or worn surfaces. Test a small area first.

It is a violation for Federal law to use this product in a manner inconsistent with its labeling.

Source: <https://smartlabel.labelinsight.com/product/6075824/usage>

LYSOL® Disinfectant Spray - Brand New Day™ - Berry & Basil 19.0 ounces aerosol can 0-19200-98367-9

Usage Instructions

One Can many surfaces

- Kitchen • Sinks • Garbage cans
- Bathroom • Bathtubs • Shower Home • Door knobs • Diaper pails
- Soft Surfaces • Mattresses • Sofas

DIRECTIONS FOR USE: Read the entire label before using the product.

Pre-clean surfaces prior to use. Hold can upright 6" to 8" from surface. Spray 3 to 4 seconds until covered with mist. Rinse toys and food contact surfaces with potable water after use.

- To Deodorize: Spray on surfaces as needed.
- To Sanitize: Surfaces must remain wet for 10 seconds then allow to air dry.
- To Disinfect: Surfaces must remain wet for 3 minutes then allow to air dry.
- For Norovirus, Hepatitis A virus, Adenovirus 2, Fusarium solani and Mycobacterium bovis BCG (Quant tuberculosis) surfaces must remain wet for 10 minutes then allow to air dry.

It is a violation of Federal law to use this product in a manner inconsistent with its labeling.

Source: <http://rbnainfo.com/smart-label/2497#usage>



SO WHAT DO WE DO IN OUR BATTLE WITH COVID-19:

For Businesses, Commercial Spaces, Condos, Shared Common Areas:

There is not one set of guidelines or protocol issued for this virus. It is too new and information is evolving daily. No one is an expert on Covid-19, yet. Industry professionals have been working together to develop some recommended procedures in cooperation with the EPA and CDC. These procedures are outlined below. It comes down to cleaning touchpoint surfaces and working to remove aerosol particles. These are techniques restoration companies routinely utilize when remediating for bio-hazard and mold. I strongly recommend any cleaning treatments be done by certified remediation companies. Certified professionals have the resources and knowledge to clean effectively. You will want to look for a company certified in trauma/ biohazard cleaning (TSC/TSCT). The methods and procedures for cleaning Covid-19 are similar in preventing contamination or spread of any pathogen.

Tip:

- Many establishments have shared common areas with furniture- ie lobbies. We recommend moving the sitting furniture to an unused area to prevent the desire for people to hang out comfortably.
- Utilize companies you feel comfortable using. This is not a time to scare or panic clients. Companies in this industry are used to dealing with catastrophic events and should be a source of information and calm during the storm.
- Ask questions and stay informed

At Home:

We improve our cleaning techniques. We read and understand our product labels. We adhere to dwell times and find products that best suit your needs. Use cleaning methods that allow you to clean to your desired level of cleanliness. For instance, when cleaning my bathroom, I work in a cleaner to dirtier, top to bottom fashion.

Let's Clean the Bathroom

Step One: Gather equipment and materials.

- Chemicals
 - foaming disinfectant spray
 - disinfecting liquid spray
 - abrasive liquid or powder
 - glass cleaner
- Equipment
 - vacuum
 - two buckets (one for chemicals and equipment and the other for water (mop bucket)
 - 2 sponges- different colors (one for toilet + floor and one for everything else)
 - old toothbrush- scrub tight areas
 - toilet brush
 - scour pad
 - scrub brush
 - gloves
 - cleaning cloths- I prefer washable cloths. Paper towels can be used but never flushed.
 - two old floor mats or towels.
 - music

Step Two: Set the mood- Turn on good music and turn it up!!! As a child I always knew my mom was cleaning and soon I would be too whenever I heard Aretha Franklin or Elvis Presley blaring through the house.



Step Three: Start Cleaning

1. Remove all bathing towels and washcloths to be laundered as usual.
2. Vacuum flooring and baseboards. Take our trash
3. Place floor mats/towel directing outside the bathroom. One will be where you- catch dirt, place mop bucket, equipment, and chemicals during cleaning, wipe feet as needed. The other mat is placed directly to the left or right of entrance and is used to store cleaned content. Content is your stuff on counters and in shower- soap dispenser, shampoo, q-tip holder, makeup mirror, etc
4. Put on gloves. Read labels on any new products you are using.
5. Spray disinfecting spray on cleaning cloth or directly on content and wipe all content on vanity, toilet lid, floor, shower, etc... Toilet plunger and toilet brush can stay in the bathroom, we will clean those when we clean the floor. Move content onto floor mat/towel outside bathroom.

Now you have a work space ready for cleaning. Hard/ non-porous surfaces. Time to Scrub.

6. Spray vanity, toilet, shower, tub, door knobs, fixtures, etc... with foaming disinfectant spray. Get good coverage of all areas. Foam helps determine where you have sprayed and holds in place on vertical surfaces longer. I lightly spray light switches so as not to soak but allow the chemical to work. Note: I do not recommend to spray directly on any wood products, wipe those separately with wood cleaning products.

Now we wait- Remember Dwell times. :)

7. During Dwell time, this is when I clean the windows and lights in the bathroom. During this time I also clean shower pan and tub floor. I use an abrasive cleaner along with a scour pad, scrub brush, and tooth brush to scrub the floor of shower and tub. This process is always challenging and requires the most elbow grease. I do not rinse. I scrub and let it set.
8. Dwell time over- working from top down, I scrub shower walls, shower doors (with foam spray and sponges- no abrasives) and tub, I clean the shower and tub floor one more time. Rinse with shower head or a rinse cup. I fill up my mop bucket with at least two gallons of water and add the recommended amount of disinfecting solution- set aside.
9. I scrub the sink and wipe clean with cleaning cloths treated with disinfecting multi surface spray, again top down.
10. Then I scrub the toilet with toilet brush and wipe with a dedicated sponge.
11. Before I start the floor, I shine all fixtures, mirrors, shower doors, etc. I do generally wipe down on all surfaces one last time. Change cleaning cloth regularly.
12. Floor time, on my hands and knees, I work my way out of the bathroom, I never use a mop in bathrooms as they do not allow me to to perform detail. Using a scrub brush and sponge, I scrub and wipe the floor as I go. I scrub grout lines with special attention to the toilet area (#boys), I wipe baseboards, floor vents as well, on my way out. Once I get to the bathroom door, I set my mop bucket on the floor mat and clean the last bit of flooring, wiping the threshold.
13. I restock the bathroom with content, towels, refill soap dispenser, toilet paper, etc.
14. Now the bathroom is clean and no one can use it for 30 mins because I just cleaned it and I want it to stay clean for a little bit :)

Step Four: Enjoy your Beautiful Bathroom. Cheers!

I understand this cleaning process can be tedious. I am sharing to provide a framework for homeowners who can adapt to suit their own needs and goals. People often ask me what cleaning products work the best and my answer is the same, whichever one you will use regularly. I happen to enjoy cleaning. It is a form of therapy for me, others feel the exact opposite. I urge everyone to find cleaning products and equipment, you'll use and develop methods that work for you and your family. There are very few things better than a clean home. Together we will all get through this. We will be better, stronger and cleaner :)

Take Care,

Jennifer L. Osborn MBA, GC, CMI, AMRT, WRT, FRT, TSC
CAI Educated Business Partner, CMCA®
CEO/Owner
SC Companies Inc.

24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE

Restore

- Flood
- Fire
- Mold
- Biohazard

Build

- Full rebuilds
- Handyman jobs
- Finished basements
- Additions
- Drywall & painting

Clean

- One-time or ongoing cleaning
- Construction clean-up
- Pressure washing
- Carpets, upholstery & windows

Inspect

- Home Inspections
- Mold Inspections
- Air-Quality Testing
- Thermal Imaging
- Acoustic/Sound Testing

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