

# Guidelines on Decontamination

## What is the Coronavirus?

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory disease caused by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)-CoV-2 virus. The current mutation is a new strain of the SARS virus and no individual has any immunity prior to an exposure. The CDC has reported that testing has begun on a vaccine but for now, everyone should prepare and plan for possible impacts resulting from COVID-19. It has spread from China to many other countries around the world, including the United States.

It is important that all projects, jobsites, trailers, breakrooms and other similar locations are properly prepared and decontaminated before returning to the job. Proper cleaning and disinfection are mandatory steps in ensuring worker safety. Proper cleaning includes wearing appropriate PPE while performing any cleaning and disinfection duties on the job or at home. Remember to properly dispose of any contaminated PPE if it cannot be cleaned and sterilized. CDC recommends the following:

### 1. Cleaning:

- a. Clean surfaces with soap and water or proper cleaning solutions.
- b. Remember to clean routinely all frequently touched surfaces, not just once a day but as often as needed.

**Examples:** tables, doorknobs, light switches, phones, desks, computers, toilets, tablets, faucets and any other place where one or more persons commonly interact with and touch on a regular basis.

### 2. Disinfecting:

- a. After cleaning, use a disinfecting spray or liquid that is an EPA-registered household disinfectant.
- b. It is vital to follow all manufacturer's instructions on the label for safe and effective use.
- c. A diluted household bleach solution may be used for disinfecting purposes under the following conditions.
  - i. Use proper bleach that is not past its expiration date and NEVER mix any bleach with ammonia or other cleansers—dangerous and fatal fumes could result!
  - ii. Leave the solution on the surface for at least one minute to ensure proper disinfection.
  - iii. A proper mix for a disinfection solution using bleach is: 1/3rd cup bleach per gallon of water.
- d. Use an alcohol solution that is at least 70% alcohol for proper disinfection.

### 3. Cloth Materials such as Rugs and Drapes:

- a. Clean surface with soap and water.
- b. Launder items in the warmest water recommended by manufacturer and dry these items completely before returning them to a work area.

### 4. Garment Care/Laundry:

- a. Wear PPE such as gloves and masks when handling dirty laundry, especially if there is a confirmed sickness reported.
- b. Launder items in the warmest water recommended by manufacturer and dry these items completely before wearing them again.
- c. Remember to clean and disinfect dirty clothes hampers to prevent cross contamination and future exposures.

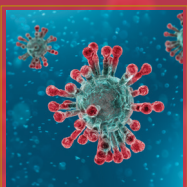


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published 4/3/2020



- d. Remove gloves and dispose of properly. Remember to follow up by washing hands according to established protocols.

**5. Cleaning Areas Where Possible Exposure has Occurred:**

- a. Cordon off area to prevent unauthorized access from other employees.
- b. Open doors and windows to the outside to provide better air circulation for at least 24 hours or as long as practical.
- c. Remember to wear gloves, gowns, masks and other proper PPE while cleaning and disinfecting all areas where a confirmed sick worker may have visited and also while handling any trash from all areas that may have been contaminated.

**6. Remember to Clean and Wash Your Hands Often:**

- a. After blowing your nose.
- b. After using the restroom.
- c. Before eating and preparing any food for consumption by you and/or others.
- d. After any contact with persons, animals and pets.
- e. Before providing any care for a child or other person who needs assistance.

**Employers should:**

- a. Educate workers and provide proper training.
- b. Provide information on symptoms of exposure and what to do if workers develop any of those symptoms.
- c. Develop and communicate all policies related to the protection of employees and others.
- d. Remember that Hazard Communication Standard requires proper training when using any chemical in the workplace. See 29 CFR 1910.1200 for more information.
- e. Comply with all exposure control plans, bloodborne pathogen programs and hazardous waste operations if applicable.