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Interim Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Food Manufacturing Facilities or Food Retail Stores for COVID-19

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To help prevent spread of COVID-19, procedures and supplies should be in place to encourage proper hand and respiratory hygiene as well as routine cleaning and disinfection of high-risk locations. This guidance is provided for any food manufacturing facilities, food distribution centers or food retail stores so that owners, operators and other individuals can incorporate these procedures into their facility protocols.

Background:

In December 2019, a new respiratory disease called Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) was detected in China. COVID-19 is caused by a virus (SARS-CoV-2) that is part of a large family of viruses called coronaviruses.

Hand Hygiene:

Signage with handwashing procedures should be posted in prominent locations promoting hand hygiene.

- Regular hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds should be done:
 - Before and after eating.
 - After sneezing, coughing, or nose blowing.
 - After touching face, hair, cellphone and/or clothing.
 - After using the restroom.
 - Before handling food.
 - After touching or cleaning surfaces that may be contaminated.
 - After using shared equipment and supplies.

Respiratory Hygiene:

- Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or the corner of elbow.
- Dispose of soiled tissues immediately after use.

What steps should be taken to clean and disinfect against COVID-19?

Now:

All facilities should continue performing routine cleaning and sanitization of their facilities. Additionally, high-risk locations (see below) warrant cleaning and disinfection on a regular schedule.

If an individual with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 was symptomatic while in your facility:

Immediately contact your local health department. Clean and disinfect throughout the area.

Routine Cleaning:

Standard Infection Control Practices

As part of standard infection control practices, routine cleaning should be rigorous and ongoing, and time should be allocated for individuals to routinely clean. Surfaces touched most frequently must be prioritized for routine cleaning because these surfaces can be reservoirs for germs and an exposure pathway for transmission to people through contact with these surfaces.

Examples of priority areas for routine cleaning include:

- High contact surfaces that are touched by many different people, such as light switches, handrails, cart handles, equipment buttons, shared equipment and doorknobs/handles.
- Floors and walls.
- Trash containers.
- Restrooms
- Heat and air conditioner vents.
- Horizontal surfaces and light fixtures.
- Frequently used equipment.
- Uniform, protective equipment and/or linens.

Identify and routinely clean and disinfect high-risk locations even before a confirmed case of COVID-19 occurs.

Examples of high-risk locations include:

First Aid Station / Health Office:

- Clean and disinfect health cots regularly (after each use)
- Cover treatment tables and use pillow protectors
- Discard or launder coverings after each use

Restrooms

- Clean and disinfect all restroom surfaces, fixtures, door knobs, push plates, and switches (at least once daily).

Dining Areas/Breakrooms

- Clean and disinfect counters, tables, and chairs regularly (at least once daily).

Examples of frequently touched surfaces:

- Shared equipment;
- Counters, tables and chairs;
- Door handles and push plates;
- Handrails;
- Kitchen and bathroom faucets;
- Equipment surfaces;
- Equipment buttons;
- Light switches;
- Remote controls;
- Shared telephones;
- Shared computers, keyboards and mice
- Shared electronics and phones

Note: Some surfaces or equipment are difficult to clean or are sensitive to liquids. When shared, they may contribute to indirect transmission. Locations with shared-use equipment should provide posted signs regarding proper hand-hygiene before and after using such equipment to minimize disease transmission. Also, consider using removable washable covers to protect hard to clean equipment hardware against spills and facilitate cleaning.

Locker rooms

- Clean and disinfect surfaces, tables, chairs and lockers regularly (at least once daily).

Other Frequently Touched Surfaces or Equipment or Areas

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces on a periodic schedule as operational considerations allow, at least daily.

Cleaning and Disinfection:

Cleaning removes germs, dirt and impurities from surfaces or objects. Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces or objects.

Individuals should use any protective equipment (e.g. gloves) as recommended on product labels. Carefully read and follow all label instructions for safe and effective use.

Step 1: Cleaning: Always clean surfaces prior to use of disinfectants in order to reduce soil and remove germs. Dirt and other materials on surfaces can reduce the effectiveness of disinfectants. Clean surfaces using water and soap or detergent to reduce soil and remove germs. For combination products that can both clean and disinfect, always follow the instructions on the specific product label to ensure effective use. In New York State, all state agencies and state authorities are required to use green cleaning products. For additional information on the laws regarding the use of green cleaning products, see the Policies, Guidelines and Report section of NY's Green Cleaning Program website.

Step 2: Disinfection: Cleaning of soiled areas must be completed prior to disinfection to ensure the effectiveness of the disinfectant product. Use the DEC list of products registered in New York State identified as effective against COVID-19. This list corresponds to those identified by the EPA.

If these products are unavailable, disinfect surfaces using an EPA- and DEC*-registered disinfectant labeled to be effective against rhinovirus and/or human coronavirus. If these commercial products are unavailable, it is also acceptable to use a fresh 2% chlorine bleach solution (approximately 1 tablespoon of bleach in 1 quart of water). Prepare the bleach solution daily or as needed.

- Label directions must be followed when using disinfectants to ensure the target viruses are effectively killed. This includes adequate contact times (i.e., the amount of time a disinfectant should remain on surfaces to be effective), which may vary between five and ten minutes after application. Disinfectants that come in a wipe form will also list effective contact times on their label.
- For disinfectants that come in concentrated forms, it is important to carefully follow instructions for making the diluted concentration needed to effectively kill the target virus. This information can be found on the product label.

Step 3: Disposal: Place all used gloves and other disposable items in a bag that can be tied closed before disposing of them with other waste. Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds immediately after removing gloves or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available. Soap and water should be used if hands are visibly soiled.

Notification, Isolation and Disinfection:

If a laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 works in your facility or was known to be present in your facility, **notify your local health department** and perform cleaning and disinfection of **all** surfaces throughout the area immediately.

Your local health department will be involved in monitoring the affected individual while symptomatic (and therefore isolated) until their recovery. If an employee, the local health department will also be involved in clearing the individual from their isolation after their full recovery, thereby clearing them before returning to work.

Cleaning and disinfection should be conducted by individuals who have been trained to use products in a safe and effective manner. Training should be ongoing to ensure procedures for safe and effective use of all products are followed. Training assures that individuals are reminded to read and follow use and safety instructions on product labels. It should also identify the location of all personal protective equipment (e.g., gloves) that should be used.

*NYSDEC registration will not be listed on disinfection product labels. Information about disinfection product registration with NYSDEC can be found at: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/nyspad/products>. If you have any questions about NYSDEC pesticide registration, please call the NYSDEC Bureau of Pesticide Management at 518-402-8748.

More information:

New York State Department of Health's COVID-19 Webpage:
<https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/>

Listing of Local Health Departments:
https://www.health.ny.gov/contact/contact_information/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Webpage:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>

FDA guidance regarding food, food handling:
<https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/mcm-issues/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-frequently-asked-questions>