

Disinfection In The Work Environment

How Much Is Too Much?



Cleaning, however, does not fully disinfect the surface. Applying an EPA registered disinfectant will kill or inactivate up to 99.9999% of pathogens present on surfaces. Disinfection also eliminates the risk of cross contamination that may occur in the cleaning process.

HOW FREQUENTLY SHOULD YOU DISINFECT YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT?

In terms of frequency, disinfecting should occur based on use. The [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) recommends surfaces that are considered "high-touch" be disinfected on a regular basis. High-touch surfaces can include surfaces like light switches, door handles, counter tops, desks, etc. Determining what regular means depends on the work environment itself and how often others are touching those high-touch surfaces.



GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW FOR DISINFECTANT USE IN WORK ENVIRONMENTS

Knowing that pathogens can reside on surfaces and multiply can lead to the assumption that the more disinfectant applied across the entire work environment can reduce the risk of infection even further. Though it is true that cleaning and disinfecting can reduce the amount of pathogens when applied on surfaces, questions to be considered are,



01

How frequently is the surface touched by someone's hands

what or who comes in contact with that area

02

03

what are the potential hazards of the type of disinfectant being applied

When it comes to surfaces to disinfect, the CDC recommends high-touch surfaces be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Other areas that are not frequently touched may be disinfected at a lower frequency. This targeted approach can help prevent the misapplication of the disinfectant and also reduce the cost of maintaining a clean, safe, and healthy work environment.



Contact is not just an important consideration for applying disinfectant, it is also important when considering the areas being disinfected. When disinfecting areas where food is prepared or consumed, the product label should be carefully followed. Although there are some food contact surface approved disinfectants, most require a potable water rinse once the proper dwell time has been achieved.

Not all disinfectants are created equal, in both their chemistry, and their application. Just because a disinfectant is killing pathogens doesn't mean it isn't killing something else. Harsher disinfectants like bleach or peroxide can cause damage to the human body, as well as the surfaces they are applied to. Quat based disinfectants are less dangerous than bleach or peroxide, but still come with hazard risk.



REGULAR CLEANING AND DISINFECTION IS KEY TO A SAFE AND HEALTHY BUSINESS

A clean and healthy work environment has never been more important to the health and safety of employees. Understanding how and when to properly disinfect will help ensure a clean, safe and healthy work environment doesn't turn in to a health hazard.