

# SOUTH WEST IPAC HUB NEWSLETTER



## Environmental Cleaning

Environmental cleaning is the cleaning and disinfecting of an environment to reduce transmission of infections. It should be performed routinely and consistently to protect all individuals and to provide a safe and healthy environment. It is an important component to infection prevention and control in all types of setting. Effective environmental cleaning involves selecting the appropriate product, implementing policies and procedures, and providing regular training to staff. Having a clear approach will help staff understand their responsibilities and allow for consistency when performing environmental cleaning.

## Considerations for Choosing a Disinfectant Product:

- 1) Disinfectants must have either a Drug Identification Number (DIN) or Natural Product Number (NPN): These numbers confirm they are approved for use in Canada. Household bleach may not have a DIN or NPN but is an effective disinfectant if used correctly.
- 2) Review the [Health Canada Drug Product Database](#) to determine if the disinfectant is registered and approved for use in Canada.
- 3) Disinfectant should have contact time of less than 5 minutes. Products with long contact time may dry out before the desired time is reached.
- 4) Choose a product that is effective against multiple germs/pathogens.
- 5) Select a product that is a good fit for your facility.

Considerations include:

- Surface compatibility: Some materials and surfaces may break down with repeated use of certain chemicals.
- Concentrate vs. ready to use (RTU): concentrate will require dilution according to manufacturer's instructions and solution should be verified with test strips. RTU may be more expensive but it does not require dilution and easier to use.
- Ease of Use: One step cleaner and disinfectant vs. two step (i.e., separate cleaning step). Many products combine a cleaner (detergent) with a disinfectant. Therefore, instead of being a 2-step process, cleaning and disinfection can be accomplished in one.

- 6) Staff and occupant safety concerns: Most disinfectants require PPE for safe use. Staff will be more likely to use products that are non-toxic, non-irritating and have an acceptable odour.



## Policies and Procedures

All settings should have up-to-date policies and procedures for environmental cleaning that are designed to reduce the transmission of infections within their facility. Policies and procedures should be easy to understand and outline clear expectations of staff. They should be reviewed regularly to ensure any procedural changes are updated.

### Policies and procedures should include and not limited to:

- Defined responsibility and accountability for specific areas and items.
- Procedures for routine cleaning and disinfection.
- Procedures for outbreak management.
- Procedures for pathogens that may require special considerations such as norovirus and C. difficile.
- Cleaning and disinfection standards and frequency.
- Initial and continuing education for all environmental service workers.
- Regular auditing to ensure environmental cleanliness.
- Ongoing review of all policies and cleaning procedures.



## General Cleaning and Disinfecting Tips

- Check to make sure products are not expired.
- Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) during cleaning and disinfection. Perform hand hygiene before putting on and after removing your PPE.
- Always clean to remove visible soil before disinfection.
- Clean and disinfect from clean to dirty areas, from top to bottom, and from low-touch to high-touch surfaces. This helps to make sure that dirtier areas don't contaminate the cleaner areas.
- Do not double-dip cloths. Only put clean cloths into the cleaning or disinfectant solution.
- Product bottles must not be topped up and product should not be applied using a trigger spray. Consider using a squirt or flip top bottle.
- Replace used cloths with a clean one after cleaning heavily soiled areas and after each use. Use a separate cloth between the bedroom and the bathroom.
- If a bed space is shared, clean all surfaces in each space separately.
- Use a caddy or cart to store cleaning and disinfecting supplies, PPE, and alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR).
- Tools used for cleaning and disinfecting must be cleaned and dried or laundered between uses.



# Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin

Public Health Ontario collects information and monitors the activity of influenza and various respiratory pathogens in Ontario. The results of the analysis are disseminated to local, provincial, and federal health agencies to support surveillance efforts.

The Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin (ORPB) is released weekly and provides a summary of current respiratory pathogen activity. This information will help to support the implementation of appropriate prevention and control measures.

## References:

- Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infections in All Health Care Settings, 3rd Edition
- City of Toronto: Infection Prevention and Control in Out of the Cold Sites-General Cleaning and Disinfecting Tips
- Guelph-Wellington Satellite IPAC Hub: Criteria for Selecting a Disinfectant
- Guelph-Wellington Satellite IPAC Hub: Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Principles
- Huron Perth & Area Ontario Health Team: Infection Prevention and Control Policy Manual-Cleaning and Disinfection Policy

South West IPAC Hub

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