



Environmental Health and Safety

Safety Guideline

Cleaning Laboratories and Research Facilities

Effective Date:

OVERVIEW: This following guidance is provided to laboratories and research facilities to help identify approved COVID-19 disinfection methods researchers can follow for their high touch work areas and equipment.

Facilities will continue to clean and disinfect public and common areas, such as hallways and restrooms, with their disinfection protocols.

ROUTES OF TRANSMISSION: According to the CDC, what is currently known about the novel coronavirus and similar coronaviruses that cause SARS and MERS, ***spread from person-to-person*** with these viruses happens most frequently among close contacts (within about 6 feet). This type of transmission occurs via respiratory droplets. On the other hand, transmission of novel coronavirus to persons from surfaces contaminated with the virus has not been documented. Transmission of coronavirus occurs much more commonly through respiratory droplets than through fomites. Current evidence suggests that novel coronavirus may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. ***Cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection is a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in households and community settings.***

MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING: During this COVID-19 pandemic, if you can avoid coming to campus, please do. Now is a great time to work on manuscripts and grant proposals instead of wet-bench work.

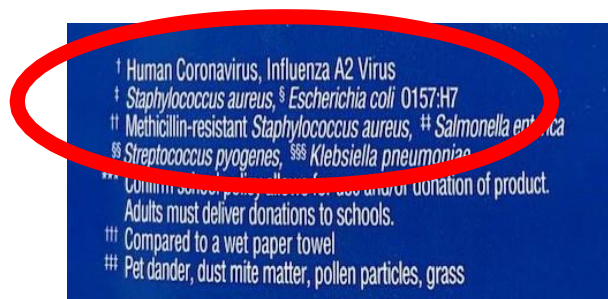
HIGH-TOUCH LOCATIONS AND EQUIPMENT: The following are locations and equipment with high frequency of handling and contact. As such these represent a higher probability of viral loading in the work area and should be disinfected on a routine basis.

- Benchtops
- Equipment handles and latches
- Equipment controls and touchpads
- Drawer and cabinet handles
- Bin and water incubator lids
- Hand tools
- Micropipettors and other shared tools
- Faucet handles and sprayer grips
- Baskets, bins, trays, etc.
- Outsides of shared chemical bottles and caps
- Chair backs and arm rests
- Pens, whiteboard markers, etc.

CLEANING GUIDELINES FOR LABORATORIES AND RESEARCH FACILITIES

USE EPA-APPROVED DISINFECTANTS: Use a disinfectant that is [certified by the EPA](#) to be effective against the COVID-19 coronavirus. There are two easy ways to tell this.

- Verify the disinfectant is on the EPA's List N registry of disinfectants. Disinfectants are listed by both name and by EPA ID number. Your product may not be listed by name, but if the EPA number matches what's on the list, then this is a good disinfectant to use.
- The fine print of the label will list Coronavirus among the organisms for which it is approved.



Common Laboratory Disinfectants Approved for COVID-19:

- 10% bleach in water is an approved disinfectant
- 70% ethanol is **not** recommended for all surfaces, though it may be appropriate for electronics and other delicate surfaces.
- NOTE that not all products with the name “Lysol” or “Clorox” are necessarily effective against Coronavirus.

DO NOT MIX cleaning chemicals together, especially with bleach!

PAY ATTENTION TO DISINFECTANT CONTACT TIME: The overwhelming majority of disinfectants need time to work, so simply spraying and immediately wiping is insufficient. For most disinfectants, you need to spray until the surface is thoroughly wet, then wait 5-10 minutes before wiping. This is even true of bleach. If your bottle doesn't have the instructions on the label, look them up online. DO NOT ASSUME that the disinfectant works on contact.

WEAR APPROPRIATE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT: You may already be wearing appropriate PPE based on your laboratory work, but if not, this is the time to pull on splash goggles or safety glasses, and chemical-compatible impervious gloves. A lab coat is a good idea also, especially if you are spraying bleach. [Reference the Safety Data Sheet \(SDS\)](#) for information on PPE, the hazards of the disinfectant, and any other information you might want to know about it.

CLEANING GUIDELINES FOR LABORATORIES AND RESEARCH FACILITIES

USE CARE WITH DELICATE EQUIPMENT: Certain equipment may be damaged by spraying (computer keyboards and mice, key-style equipment touchpads, on/off switches, power tools, etc.) and by harsher disinfectants such as bleach. If you have approved quaternary-ammonium disinfectant or 70% ethanol wipes, use them for these more delicate tasks.

If you do not have disinfectant wipes, these items can be disinfected by soaking a dry wipe or clean soft cloth in the alcohol or disinfectant until it is soaked but not quite dripping, and then using it to wipe the keyboard/switch/etc., being careful to avoid getting liquid into any openings. The surface should be visibly wet after you wipe it, and the disinfectant should be left to evaporate from the surface. There is an additional guidance document available for disinfecting computer equipment.

Additional [guidance for cleaning computers](#) and sensitive electronics is available on the OEHS website.