

The following fact sheet aims to provide guidance on worker precautions, cleaning practices, and areas requiring specialized attention when cleaning areas previously occupied by persons confirmed or suspected of having COVID-19.

## Before you start<sup>1</sup>:

- Close the impacted area, open outside doors, windows, and increase air circulation in the area if possible.
- Wait 24 hours before you clean and disinfect. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

- The risk of exposure to cleaning staff is inherently low.
- [Masks are required](#) as is the case for being in any indoor environment (unless exempt as defined in the Order). Please note: N95 mask is not warranted. Be sure to change your mask if soiled or damp.
- Under normal cleaning, full aprons or gowns are not recommended.
- Additional PPE may be needed if there is a risk of splash from cleaning chemicals (e.g. eye protection), gloves and gowns if used should be compatible with the disinfectant product being used. Always follow manufacturer's instructions for PPE when using any products.
- When cleaning communal areas, supplementary PPE may also be warranted if there are others present in the room or area that are confirmed or suspected of having COVID-19 (such as close contacts, or those awaiting test results).
- When donning and doffing any form of PPE be sure to follow the [correct donning procedure](#) as well as the [correct doffing procedure](#) to minimise any contamination risk. Always clean hands after removing PPE.
- Cleaning staff should clean hands before putting on any PPE such as gloves, masks and eye protection. Follow the doffing guideline (listed in the previous bullet). Ensure proper hand hygiene is practiced: with soap and warm running water for 20 seconds or using an alcohol based hand sanitizer with 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol.
- If gowns are not used or required, clothing should be laundered afterwards, taking special care, attention and using [laundry precautions](#)<sup>2,5</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> CDC (Dec. 28, 2020). Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility. Everyday Steps, Steps When Someone is Sick, and Considerations for Employers. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility-H.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> NCCEH (March 31, 2020). Using Shared Laundry Facilities During the COVID-19 Pandemic. Retrieved from: <https://ncceh.ca/documents/guide/using-shared-laundry-facilities-during-covid-19-pandemic>

## Environmental Cleaning:



- Before beginning cleaning remove all personal effects left behind, such as dishes, glasses, trays and ice buckets (even if they appear untouched), and take to a designated location for immediate washing.
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect all areas of the room, with special attention to all high touch surfaces (e.g. door handles, light switches, faucets, stair banisters, toilet seats and flush levers, telephones, electronics, cabinet handles, storage units and sleeping mats)<sup>3</sup>.
- Low touch surfaces (e.g. shelves, chairs, windowsills, headwall units, light fixtures)<sup>4</sup> should also be cleaned and sanitized.
- Consider any other common areas that an infected individual may have occupied, including washrooms, showers, lobby areas, elevators, hallways or shared laundry. These areas must be cleaned as per the [Sanitation Process](#) outlined below.
- Verify that the disinfectant being used is approved for use and at the appropriate concentration. The attached Environmental Cleaning resource in [Appendix A](#) highlights these specifics.
- Be sure to follow the manufacturer's specifications on application, and practice personal and occupational safety precautions when mixing up any sanitizer solution.
- Do not use the same cloth on more than one piece of furniture, place used cloth in receptacle and get a new one. Always clean from clean to dirty areas (do the bathroom last) and high to low.

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<sup>3</sup> NCEH (April 28, 2020). Reducing COVID-19 Transmission through Cleaning and Disinfecting Household Surfaces. Retrieved from: <https://nceh.ca/documents/guide/reducing-covid-19-transmission-through-cleaning-and-disinfecting-household-surfaces>

<sup>4</sup> Gov'n of Canada (April 30, 2020). Infection prevention and control for COVID-19: second interim guidance for acute healthcare settings. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/infection-prevention-control-covid-19-second-interim-guidance.html#a12>

Sanitation Process: the following table illustrates the correct procedure for cleaning and disinfection.

Cleaning and Disinfection is a 2 Step Process	
<p><b>1st Step</b></p> 	<p><b>2nd Step</b></p> 
<p>Surfaces must first be cleaned to break down grease and remove organic material from the surface before they can be effectively disinfected. This can be done with a combined cleaner/ disinfectant in-one solution* or with a detergent solution.</p>	<p>After a surface is cleaned, a disinfectant can be applied for the appropriate amount of time to kill most germs. This can be done with a combined cleaner/ disinfectant in-one solution* or with a disinfectant alone (such as a bleach solution).</p>
<p>*If a cleaner/disinfectant in one-solution is used, both steps still need to be followed (i.e. the surface needs to be wiped down twice)</p>	
<p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start cleaning from areas with the least amount of contamination before moving to areas with more contamination (e.g clean the toilet last).</li> <li>• Don't use the same cloth or mop in multiple rooms.</li> <li>• Use separate cloths for the bedroom, bathroom sink and toilet.</li> <li>• Don't double dip the same cloth in your cleaning solution.</li> </ul>	

## Areas of Special Attention:

- For porous items, such as dirty linens and towels, they should be bagged and taken directly to the laundry. Items should be laundered according to the manufacturer's instructions, but where possible, use the warmest water and dryer settings. [Do not wash heavily soiled items in a water-soluble bag](#) as this is not recommended. You may choose to tag bags as "heavily soiled." Alternatively, badly soiled linens and towels may need to be properly discarded or incinerated.
- Drapes should be replaced and bagged for laundry or steam-cleaned<sup>5</sup>.
- Toilet brushes, unused toilet paper and other disposable supplies should be discarded<sup>4</sup>.
- The risk of spreading COVID-19 during vacuuming is unknown<sup>6</sup>. It is still suggested that a vacuum equipped with a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, if available<sup>6</sup> is preferable. Do not vacuum a room or space that has people in it. Wait until the room or space is empty to vacuum and temporarily turn off in-room, window-mounted, or on-wall recirculation HVAC (if applicable).
- Fabric chairs and couches may be cleaned using a steam cleaner (reaching a minimum temperature of 71°C) or sanitizer suitable for porous surfaces, e.g. quaternary ammonia or hydrogen peroxide product.
- Washroom and showers are typically 'dirtier' areas, with a greater potential for splash back of disinfectant. Pay particular attention to these locations. For detailed information on cleaning washrooms and showers, [this resource](#) may prove helpful.

**If you have further questions or require any resources, please contact your local Health Protection and Environmental Services Office. Contact information can be found at <https://www.islandhealth.ca/our-locations/health-protection-environmental-services-locations>**

<sup>5</sup> Island Health (May 2018). Norovirus and the hospitality industry. A guide for hotel operators. Retrieved at: <https://www.islandhealth.ca/sites/default/files/2018-05/norovirus-guide-hospitality-industry.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> CDC (Feb. 8, 2021). Frequently Asked Questions. Retrieved here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#vacuumfaq>

Appendix A<sup>7</sup>



Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

## Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings

This document provides guidance on cleaning and disinfection of public settings, including schools, transit, colleges/universities, recreational facilities and other workplaces.

### What you should know

- Commonly used cleaners and disinfectants are effective against COVID-19.
- Frequently touched surfaces are most likely to be contaminated.
- Use only disinfectants that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN). A DIN is an 8-digit number given by Health Canada that confirms it is approved for use in Canada.
- Check the expiry date of products you use and always follow manufacturer's instructions.

### Clean frequently touched surfaces twice per day

- ☑ In addition to routine cleaning, surfaces that have frequent contact with hands should be cleaned and disinfected twice per day and when visibly dirty.
- ☑ Examples include doorknobs, elevator buttons, light switches, toilet handles, counters, hand rails, touch screen surfaces and keypads.
- ☑ In addition to routine cleaning, check with your organization for any specific protocols for cleaning for COVID-19.



<sup>7</sup> Island Health (March 2020). Retrieved from: <https://www.islandhealth.ca/sites/default/files/covid-19/documents/fact-sheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning.pdf>

## Select products

### Cleaners

- Break down grease and remove organic material from the surface.
- Used separately before using disinfectants.
- Can be purchased with cleaner and disinfectant combined in a single product.

### Disinfectants

- Have chemicals that kill most germs.
- Applied after the surfaces have been cleaned.
- Have a drug identification number (DIN).

### Disinfectant Wipes

- Have combined cleaners and disinfectants in one solution.
- May become dry due to fast drying properties. Should be discarded if they become dry.
- Not recommended for heavily soiled surfaces.
- Have a drug identification number (DIN).

## Prepare products for use

- Where possible, use pre-mixed solution.
- Read and follow manufacturer's instructions to:
  - properly prepare solution
  - allow adequate contact time for disinfectant to kill germs (see product label)
  - wear gloves when handling cleaning products including wipes
  - wear any other personal protective equipment recommended by the manufacturer

## Sanitizing Solution

List of disinfecting agents and their working concentrations known to be effective against coronaviruses<sup>1,2</sup>:

Agent and concentration	Uses
1. 1:100 dilution Chlorine: Bleach – sodium hypochlorite (5.25%) 500 ppm solution 10 ml bleach to 990 ml water	Used for disinfecting surfaces and common touch surfaces equipment (e.g. counters, door knobs, Allow surface to air dry naturally
2. 1:50 dilution Chlorine: Bleach - sodium hypochlorite (5.25%) 1,000ppm solution 20 ml bleach to 980 ml water	Used for disinfecting surfaces contaminated with bodily fluids and waste (e.g. vomit, diarrhea, mucus, feces) (after cleaning with soap and water first). Allow surface to air dry naturally.
3. Accelerated Hydrogen Peroxide 0.5%	Used for cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. Most products cannot be diluted. Follow manufacturer's instructions.
4. Quaternary Ammonium Compounds (QUATs)	Used for cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces (e.g. floors, walls, furnishings). Most products cannot be diluted. Follow manufacturer's instructions.

<sup>1</sup> Dellanno, Christine, Quinn Vega, and Diane Boesenberg. "The antiviral action of common household disinfectants and antiseptics against murine hepatitis virus, a potential surrogate for SARS coronavirus." *American journal of infection control* 37.8 (2008): 649-652.

<sup>2</sup> Provincial Infection Prevention Control Network of British Columbia. "Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines for Providing Healthcare to Clients Living in the Community." (2014). [https://www.nrcnet.ca/web-content/uploads/PICNet\\_Home\\_and\\_Community\\_Care\\_Guidelines\\_2014.pdf](https://www.nrcnet.ca/web-content/uploads/PICNet_Home_and_Community_Care_Guidelines_2014.pdf)

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