COVID-19 Public Health Recommendations for Environmental Cleaning of Public Facilities

This document supports owners and operators of public facilities with general cleaning and disinfection considerations for preventing illness spread, including gastrointestinal illnesses, COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses.

Note, for food preparation areas, environmental cleaners and sanitizers designed for these specific settings continue to be appropriate for their intended uses.

General Cleaning
- Increase frequency of daily cleaning and disinfection of common areas and surfaces. Pay particular attention to doorknobs, light switches, staff rooms, desktops, washrooms and other high-touch surfaces.
- Cleaning refers to the removal of visible dirt, grime and impurities. Cleaning does not kill germs but helps remove them from the surface.
- Disinfecting refers to using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces. Disinfecting is most effective after surfaces are cleaned. Both steps are important to reduce the spread of infection.
- Disinfectants must have a Drug Identification Number (DIN) and a broad-spectrum virucidal claim OR a virucidal claim against non-enveloped viruses or coronaviruses. Consider products approved by Health Canada:
- Alternatively, a 1000ppm bleach water solution can be made by mixing 20 ml (4 teaspoons) of unscented household bleach with 1000 ml (4 cups) of water. Ensure the surface remains wet with the bleach water solution for 1 minute. Food contact surfaces or toys require a rinse with clean water.
- The disinfectant concentration must be tested regularly with test papers or other testing equipment unless it is premixed by the manufacturer and marked with an expiry date. Disinfectants must be used following the manufacturer’s instructions.

Prevention
- Wash your hands often and well
- Avoid touching your face, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, particularly avoiding bodily fluids such as cough/sneeze droplets, secretions, vomit or feces
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched
- Stay at home and away from others if you are feeling ill
- Consider wearing a mask when experiencing respiratory symptoms
- When sick, cover your cough and sneezes and then wash your hands

Enhanced Measures
- In the event of a cluster of illnesses in a specific public facility, please adhere to any additional recommendations provided by Public Health at that time. In the event of an outbreak, AHS may recommend alternate disinfectants based on the type of outbreak.
References
Alberta Health Services Infection Prevention and Control
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

For more information, please contact your nearest Environmental Public Health office.

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