

Disinfection Procedures for Premises

a general guide for correct disinfection of hard surfaces
prepared by Callington Haven

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Disinfectants

Disinfectants are a distinct class of goods, called therapeutic goods. They are regulated for performance and safety depending on the intended purpose of the product as discerned from the claims made in the instructions for use, labelling and promotional material by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

There are two classes of disinfectant (<https://www.tga.gov.au/disinfectants-sterilants-and-sanitary-products>). The choice of which class of disinfectant is appropriate is dependent upon the particular disinfection requirement of the premises to be treated. Use of unapproved products will bring with it an increased risk of statutory non-compliance. Always refer to TGA regulatory compliant product labels for full directions of use and precautions.

Exempt disinfectants

These are hospital grade or household/ commercial grade disinfectants liquids, sprays, wipes, sponges and aerosols that do not make specific claims and should be used where only non-specific germ killing, or bactericidal disinfection is required. These products are not required to be included in the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods before they are supplied to the market but they must still meet all regulatory requirements as set out in the relevant legislation and guidance.

Listed disinfectants

These are hospital grade or household/ commercial grade disinfectant liquids, sprays, wipes, sponges and aerosols that make specific claims, that is virucidal, sporicidal, tuberculocidal, fungicidal or other specific organism biocidal activity. These products are required to be included in the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods before they are supplied to the market and must meet all regulatory requirements as set out in the relevant legislation and guidance.

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Disinfectants with virucidal claims, including for SARS-CoV-2 and other coronaviruses, are Listed disinfectants, and must be listed with the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

The supplier should be able to provide the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods Certificate for the product showing that it is approved for virucidal claims. The product should also be able to be independently found by searching the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods using the TGA issued ARTG number.

The TGA is currently publishing a list of registered products with approved label claims including 'Kills SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19)' that are available in Australia and New Zealand (<https://www.tga.gov.au/disinfectants-use-against-covid-19-artg-legal-supply-australia>).

CHECKLIST FOR DISINFECTANT SELECTION

It is recommended to obtain information from the supplier / manufacturer for these key criteria when selecting your disinfectant:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the disinfectant TGA approved for the Intended Purpose (ARTG Entry sighted)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the disinfectant able to be used without a pre-clean step (check label directions)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the disinfectant compatible with the surface to which it will be applied (test report sighted)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the disinfectant recommended for fogging (does not contain hypochlorite, peroxides, benzalkonium chloride, acids or alkalis)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the disinfectant safe for food preparation areas (check technical data sheet)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the disinfectant non-hazardous, non-dangerous, environmentally suitable (check Safety Data Sheet)
<input type="checkbox"/>	If the disinfectant is a concentrate, are adequately trained staff available to accurately prepare the correct dilution

Disinfection Strategy

Viruses and bacteria are transferred through various modes, including direct (person to person) transmission, or indirect direct (surface to person) transmission. For both direct and indirect transmission personal hygiene measures and/or social distancing are the first step to avoid infection and preventing the spread of infection.

Surface disinfection is critical step in managing viruses and bacteria which are transmitted via indirect (surface to person) pathways. This is particularly important on high contact and thus high risk of contamination surfaces, such as window and door handles, chairs, table surfaces and implements that are touched or handled regularly. These surfaces should be prioritised for disinfection. Other surfaces with a lower risk of contamination should be disinfected as well.

Each site is different and will require a different set of measures. A considered management measure, e.g. cold aerosol fogging, may present a low risk at one site, but a higher risk at another. Therefore, the development of a disinfection strategy must ensure the methodology follows the manufacturer's product label requirements for treatment.

Surfaces have to be completely covered with disinfectant to achieve an effective disinfection. The disinfectant can only be effective where there is direct contact with it. Disinfectants are only effective for as long as the surface is wet. Surfaces have to remain wet to reach the contact time needed (refer to the compliant TGA label of the disinfectant).



General Principles:

It is recommended that visible dirt on the surface should be cleaned off before disinfection so that viruses and bacteria cannot protect themselves from the disinfectant. Consult the manufacturer's label and technical data sheet to ensure the disinfectant can be used with or without a pre-cleaning step. It is recommended to consult the Safety Data Sheet from the manufacturer for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements.

Disinfection of small surfaces

For this type of application small hand trigger pack sprayers with an adjustable nozzle are suitable. It is recommended to wipe the sprayed surface with a clean cloth to ensure a complete coverage of the surface.

Disinfection of medium-sized surfaces

For disinfecting medium-sized surfaces, there are disinfectant concentrates which require dilution with water, and ready-to-use disinfectants which can be applied neat with hand trigger packs. All disinfectants need a minimum contact time, and it is recommended to refer to the manufacturer's label and technical data sheet for application details. Completely covering the surface is still essential.

For application on these surfaces compression and fogging sprayers are also suitable.

Disinfection of larger surfaces and rooms

The same agents as used as for the disinfection of medium-sized surfaces are generally also applicable for use on large surfaces too. Care must be taken in the selection of the disinfectant as some products may stain, corrode, or cause irritation. It is recommended that where there is any concern of staining or corrosion occurring, e.g. on furnishings, fittings, or plastics that a small, inconspicuous area if first treated and allowed to dry to test for colourfastness. For this type of application on plain, large surfaces, back-pack sprayers or cold foggers are especially suitable. This equipment needs to produce fine droplets with a

low throughput to ensure even coverage of the surfaces, without soaking them. The surfaces can be used again after a short time. Power sprayers and foggers facilitate good coverage from a distance and are also able to reach areas that are difficult to access.

Do not use flammable disinfectants for large surfaces, as the fumes may cause a fire risk,.

Disinfectant fogging

Disinfectant fogging does not replace cleaning. It is recommended that visible dirt on the surface should be cleaned off before disinfection so that viruses and bacteria cannot protect themselves from the disinfectant.

Ultra-Low Volume (ULV) fogging or misting creates droplets that can be dispersed into the air space. ULV fogging machines generate a fog or mist formed of ULV droplets between 5 - 50 microns in diameter which can float in the air for up to 10 minutes after application. The dispersal of these small micron droplets enables the disinfectant to evenly and thoroughly coat surfaces over large areas.

Studies have shown that droplets of this size give excellent coverage with minimum product use and fast drying time. It is advised to always consult the manufacturer of both the equipment and chemicals to ensure compatibility with the equipment, user, surfaces and client expectations. Disinfectants that are corrosive, irritating or hazardous such as bleaches, older quaternary compounds, acids and alkalis are not recommended for application by fogging. Consult the manufacturers label and technical data sheet for recommendations on time required before the area can be entered post-fogging.

Thermal foggers are NOT recommended for disinfection treatments. Cold foggers use air flow to create the aerosol particles. They do not warm the liquid. Cold foggers are available in a range of sizes from handheld through to backpack units, barrow mounted units and even truck mounted units.

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Food Safety – Sanitation and Disinfection

Where a site is governed by a food safety management system (e.g. HACCP and/or regulatory import/export requirements), strategies must adhere to these requirements and the contractual arrangements of the client's business.

Disinfectants must not be applied in a manner where they may come into contact with or contaminate food. Where disinfectants are required to be applied to or come into contact with food preparation surfaces, only those products classified as either food-grade or food-safe should be used. Refer to product labels for any post disinfection clean-down requirements.

