COVID-19 in construction:
Sanitation and hygiene

Minnesota OSHA Workplace Safety Consultation

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Objectives

Understand strategies to minimize COVID-19 exposure

• Limit the shared or common use of facilities, tools and equipment.
• Implement an on-site sanitation program.
• Identify common agents used for sanitation and hygiene.
• Identify key areas for on-site sanitation.
• Implement practices of effective hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
Viability of COVID-19

• Studies have indicated SARS-CoV-2 can be infectious while outside the body, on:
  ▪ copper for four hours;
  ▪ cardboard for 24 hours;
  ▪ plastic for two to three days; and
  ▪ stainless steel for two to three days.

• And it has the potential to remain infectious in the air for three hours.

How long does the virus last?
SARS-CoV-2, which causes COVID-19, needs a living host to reproduce in. A new study looks at how long it can last outside the body

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Time (outside the body)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As aerosol in the air*</td>
<td>Up to 3 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On copper</td>
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Study and paper by:
- New England Journal of Medicine
- CDC
- Universiti of California, LA, Princeton

*Researchers used a nebulizer to simulate coughing or sneezing, and found that the virus became an aerosol
Where do you see COVID-19 at your worksite?
Shared and common-use equipment

• Sharing and common use of tools and equipment should be highly discouraged or prohibited. This may include:
  ▪ power and hand tools such as trowels, saws, pneumatic-tools, carts and dollies;
  ▪ powered industrial trucks such as forklifts and buggies;
  ▪ aerial lifts such as mobile elevated work platforms;
  ▪ mobile earthmoving equipment such as front-end loaders, excavators and skid-steers; and
  ▪ personal protective equipment (PPE) such as face shields, hard hats and eye protection.
• Replace common water-dispensing systems with individual water containers or bottles.

• Assess to identify additional equipment that may be shared or common use.
Common spaces and choke points

• Minimize work area choke points:
  ▪ increase the number of access points (doorways, stairways, ladders, corridors);
  ▪ designate access points and work areas for each work crew;
  ▪ coordinate to separate work crews; and
  ▪ restrict the use of common facilities, such as skips and elevators.

• Minimize the use of shared spaces and common areas, such as work areas, meeting areas, break areas, parking lots smoking areas.
On-site sanitation

• Sanitation facilities need to be provided and may need to be increased.
  ▪ Increase the number of toilet facilities to minimize cross-over.
  ▪ Add portable or plumbed handwashing stations.
  ▪ Add trash receptacles and refuse/debris containers.
• Dispose of trash, debris and scrap materials immediately.
• Implement regular schedules for emptying and sanitizing.
On-site sanitization

- Establish a schedule for sanitizing the work-site.
  - Identify the specific surfaces and equipment to be sanitized.
  - Identify the frequency that surfaces and equipment are sanitized.
  - Identify recommended cleaning agents to be used for each surface.
- Launder clothing, work uniforms and other fabric materials.
On-site sanitization

- Sanitize personal vehicles.
- Sanitize or launder personal protective equipment.
- Sanitation schedules should include:
  - tabletops, countertops and other work surfaces;
  - doorways and door handles;
  - stairways and railings;
  - guardrail-systems and gates;
  - ladders;
On-site sanitization

- scaffolding and stair towers;
- elevators and skips;
- MEWPs and lift platforms;
- vehicle cabs and controls;
- control panels for equipment;
- toilets and handwashing facilities;
- computers, keyboards and printers;
On-site sanitization

- emergency equipment; and
- tablets and cellular devices.

Note: Electrical equipment and devices, such as switches and circuit breakers should not be sanitized with any agent unless the equipment is disconnected and the sanitizing is performed by a qualified person under prescribed manufacturer recommendations.
Cleaning and sanitizing agents

• Surfaces should be cleaned with soap and water and then disinfected with a proper agent.

• Identify disinfecting agents to be used:
  ▪ see Environmental Protection Agency List N – Disinfectants for use against SARS-CoV-2;
  ▪ make the bleach solution recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which is one-third cup bleach to one gallon water (or four teaspoons bleach to one quart of water); or
  ▪ use an alcohol-based agent containing 70% alcohol.
Practice proper hand hygiene

• Handwashing should be actively promoted.
• Provide portable or plumbed handwashing stations.
• Reassure that soap and water works best and recommend workers: apply water before soap; wash for at least 20 seconds; and rinse thoroughly.
• Encourage workers to carry portable containers of soap and water.
• If providing hand sanitizer, it should contain at least 60% alcohol.
Practice proper respiratory etiquette

• Respiratory etiquette should be actively promoted.
  ▪ Avoid sneezing or coughing near other people.
  ▪ Cover your cough and your sneeze with a tissue, your sleeve or the inside of your shirt, and immediately wash your hands.
  ▪ Wear a face covering or mask.
  ▪ Use disposable tissues and napkins.

• Avoid touching your mouth, nose or eyes with your hands.
Final notes

Keys to remember

• Assume everything you touch may be contaminated.

• Do not share equipment or tools.

• Clean, disinfect and sanitize everything.

• Encourage proper handwashing and avoidance of touching the eyes, nose and mouth.

• Assume you are infected and contagious, and practice good hygiene and proper etiquette to protect others.
Thank you

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