

Dear Department of Health, Department of Transportation, and Local Transit Manager:

Reducing the risk of exposure to COVID-19 by cleaning and disinfecting public spaces is a vital aspect in safely reopening communities. While every American has been called upon to slow the spread of the virus through social distancing and prevention hygiene, you have an especially important role in making sure our public spaces, including public transportation systems, are as safe as possible to reopen and remain open. This requires precise planning and execution before reopening and continuous maintenance after reopening.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have recently issued joint guidance that is intended for all Americans to ensure the cleanliness and safety of government offices, public spaces, businesses, schools, and homes. This CDC and EPA guidance is part of the [United States Government plan](#) and focuses on cleaning and disinfecting workplaces, businesses, schools, public spaces, and specifically, public transportation systems. The guidance is available online at https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-04/documents/316485-c_reopeningamerica_guidance_4.19_6pm.pdf.

We encourage you to read the guidance and implement these three important actions:

1. Develop an effective plan to clean and disinfect public spaces;
2. Implement the plan and provide continuous quality control oversight; and,
3. Maintain and revise your plan based on the results of that oversight and any changing conditions.

As noted in the guidance, your plan should include the use of EPA-registered disinfectants. The virus that causes COVID-19 can be killed by correctly using the right products in accordance with the label directions. EPA has compiled a list of disinfectant products that can be used against COVID-19, including ready-to-use sprays, concentrates, and wipes. Each product has been shown to be effective against another strain of human coronavirus and even against harder-to-kill (than the one that causes COVID-19) viruses, such as the norovirus.

Please remember that when using an EPA-registered surface disinfectant:

- **Closely read and follow all directions, including the precautionary statements, on the product's label.**
 - Not all products on EPA's List N can be used in the same way.
- Read and follow the precautionary statements on the label, including not ingesting or applying the product to yourself or others. This includes never applying any product on [List N](#) directly to food;
- Never mix products unless specified in the use directions. Certain combinations of chemicals will create highly toxic acids or gases;
- Wash the surface with soap and water before applying disinfectant products if the label mentions pre-cleaning;

- Follow the contact time listed for your product on [List N](#). This is the amount of time the surface must remain visibly wet to ensure efficacy against the virus. It can sometimes be several minutes; and,
- Wash your hands after using a disinfectant. This will minimize your exposure to the chemicals in the disinfectant and the pathogen you are trying to kill.

Additional information on EPA's disinfectant safety messages is available on EPA's twitter feeds, [@EPA](#) and [@ChemSafety](#). These channels will be updated with new materials throughout the COVID-19 crisis. If you have further questions, you may speak with Lahne Mattas-Curry, Communications Director for EPA's Center for Environmental Solutions & Emergency Response in the Office of Research & Development, at mattas-curry.lahne@epa.gov at 202-564-3165 or Bethany Olson of my staff at (913) 551-7905.

Best Regards,

Jim Gulliford
Regional Administrator
EPA Region 7