

Cleaning during a flu outbreak or pandemic

There are currently no special directives regarding cleaning to prevent the spread of H1N1. Survival times for influenza particles on surfaces are: 8 to 12 hours on paper or cloth; 24 to 48 hours in ambient temperatures on non-porous surfaces such as doorknobs, counters, desks, etc.; up to 72 hours on wet surfaces.

Cleaning during a flu pandemic consists of normal cleaning procedures with the use of detergent cleaners and disinfection with alcohol-based products that have influenza kill claim. A 70% alcohol and chlorine solution may be used to kill the influenza virus.

Careful, vigorous cleaning of environmental surfaces is thought to be effective in removing any contaminants

- Damp dusting is preferred over dry dusting or sweeping, which can generate dust particles.
- Use vacuum cleaners, equipped with exhaust filters on carpeted areas.
- When wet cleaning clean less heavily contaminated areas first. Change cleaning solutions and tools frequently.
- Wet mopping with a double-bucket technique (one bucket to clean and one to rinse) is preferable. When a single bucket is used, the cleaning solution should be changed more frequently.
- Equipment should be cleaned between uses and mop heads should be washed and dried before storing or reusing.

Frequently touched surfaces such as pews, hymn books, counters, doorknobs, light switches, elevator buttons, hand rails (including underside of rail), railings, refrigerator door handles, sinks, copier buttons, computer keyboards and mice and phones should be added to the routine cleaning schedule. **Disinfection frequencies of touch points in high-traffic rooms and common areas should be increased to a minimum of three times daily.** In office spaces such as desks, disinfectant wipes and sprays should be used on surfaces. **In Sunday school and nursery areas, wall and door spaces low to the ground are a factor and need to be disinfected.**

Custodial staff should be trained on proper hand washing procedures and should wear gloves while working. Cleaning can help control the spread of virus, but prevention starts with occupants. Encourage proper hand washing, respiratory etiquette and proper tissue and waste disposal among building occupants and discourage visits when sick.

You should have a planned response to the declaration of pandemic flu that includes specified processes and requirements for each area cleaned. For example, restrooms should have adequate supplies of liquid or foam soap and disposable towels as well as signage directing occupants to help prevent spread of illness with proper hand washing techniques. In kitchens, all reusable utensils, plates and cups as well as sponges and towels should be removed and replaced with disposables.

Custodial staff should conduct the following cleaning procedures on a daily basis:

- disinfecting door handles and push plates on all washroom doors
- cleaning washroom mirrors with germicidal detergent
- cleaning and disinfecting all washroom fixtures with germicide
- emptying and cleaning all waste receptacles/baskets
- damp wiping/dusting of shelving, window ledges, etc.
- mopping of floor areas
- vacuuming carpets (change the dust bags daily)

The following cleaning procedures are conducted every two days:

- cleaning of desks and tabletops using germicidal detergent
- cleaning of sinks and counters
- cleaning of glass panels in doors

The following cleaning procedures are conducted on an as-required basis:

- disinfecting of hand rails, push plates and light switches

For further information on A-H1N1 Flu see sites below:

<http://www.united-church.ca/>

The United Church Of Canada

<http://www.who.int/en/>

WHO - World Health Organization

<http://www.toronto.ca/health/pandemicflu/index.htm>

City of Toronto - Public Health
(signage can be printed from this site)

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/influenza/fam-pl-ckl-eng.php>

Public Health Agency of Canada

<http://www.churchpandemicresources.ca/>

Mennonite Church of Canada