

Catholic Mutual... "CARES"

Cleaning and Disinfecting Buildings

Due to the rapid spread of COVID-19, there is a lot of information and misinformation regarding the cleaning and disinfecting of buildings. In addition, you may have questions on the use of commercial cleaning companies and the type of cleaning services that are being offered. This document was created to help you determine what is recommended and identify what to watch out for and be wary of.

The CDC has issued guidance and recommendations on the cleaning and disinfection of households, schools, community locations and businesses with confirmed COVID-19.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>. These recommendations are aimed at limiting the survival of the virus in these environments.

You should practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (i.e. tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks) with household cleaners and EPA-registered disinfectants that are appropriate for these surfaces. All cleaning products contain instruction labels for the safe and effective use of the cleaning product, including precautions you should take when applying the product.

- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. Gloves should be discarded after each cleaning. If reusable gloves are used, those gloves should be dedicated for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces for COVID-19 and should not be used for other purposes. Consult the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfection products used. Wash hands for 20 seconds immediately after gloves are removed.
- If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, and most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
 - Diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
 - Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
 - 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water, or
 - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
 - Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens are expected to be effective against COVID-19 based on data for harder to kill viruses. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).
 - For soft (porous) surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes, remove visible contamination if present and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces. After cleaning:
 - Launder items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely.

- For your safety, please take precautions to ventilate each room while disinfecting. This will help reduce the potential of excess inhalation of fumes from the cleaning products. Should you feel you have been affected by the fumes, leave the area and seek medical advice.

Clothing, towels, linens and other items that go in the laundry

- Wear disposable gloves when handling dirty laundry from an ill person and then discard after each use. If using reusable gloves, those gloves should be dedicated for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces for COVID-19 and should not be used for other household purposes. Wash hands for 20 seconds immediately after gloves are removed.
 - If no gloves are used when handling dirty laundry, be sure to wash hands afterwards.
 - If possible, do not shake dirty laundry. This will minimize the possibility of dispersing virus through the air.
 - Launder items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely. Dirty laundry from an ill person can be washed with other people's items.
 - Clean and disinfect clothes hampers according to guidance above for surfaces. If possible, consider placing a bag liner that is either disposable (can be thrown away) or can be laundered.

Commercial Cleaning Services

If you are able to follow the Cleaning and Disinfecting guidelines set forth above by the CDC and EPA, then the need for an outside cleaning vendor to come in to clean and disinfect your building is not necessary. If you do not have the capabilities in regards to proper cleaning supplies and/or the staff to thoroughly clean and disinfect your buildings, then you may need to contract with a reputable cleaning service. Be very cautious of anyone coming up to you offering special cleaning programs that you are not familiar with. A reputable cleaning service should complete the attached Addendum to Service Contract.

Watch out for Scams!

Many State Attorney Generals offices are on the lookout for scammers going door-to-door selling coronavirus tests and cleaning supplies. You should be wary of anyone that comes by offering these supplies.

Here are a few example of the scams that you need to watch out for:

- People offering duct cleaning services or deep cleaning services to rid your home or business of the virus **(this is not necessary, traditional cleaning is enough)**.
- Disregard calls where people who claim to be from the health department saying someone you know has been infected and you can pay to have a kit mailed to you. **(There is no current process where you can order a kit and have it sent to you.)**
- Government agencies will not charge for any services, so be wary of people claiming to be from a governmental agency.

If someone comes up to your home or office and they claim to be a government official and they want to come in and check if you have the coronavirus or want more information to do a survey, do not let them in. The Health Department is not going to be going door-to-door to check to see if you have the coronavirus or not.

If you would like to have more information, please contact your Risk Management Representative.