

# DoDEA Hand Sanitizer Safe Use and Storage Guide



# The Importance of Hand Washing as The First Option

- It is very important to note there are significant differences between washing hands with soap and water and using hand sanitizer.
- According to the CDC and medical community, soap and water is the preferred method or gold standard for cleaning hands. Hand washing with soap and water is *more* effective than hand sanitizer at removing certain kinds of germs, like Norovirus.
- Soap and water work to remove *all* types of germs from hands, while sanitizer acts by killing certain germs on the skin.
- Although alcohol-based hand sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of germs in many situations, they should not be used as the primary method .
- Overuse of hand sanitizer can lead to skin irritation and cracking

# 5 Steps to Wash Your Hands the Right Way

Clean hands can stop germs and Covid-19 virus from spreading from one person to another and throughout an entire community. *Follow these five steps every time.*

**Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.

**Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.

**Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.

**Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.

**Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

# Hand Sanitizer is not a Replacement for Soap and Water

- Washing hands with soap and water is the **best** way to get rid of germs in most situations. If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands in many situations. However, hand sanitizer can also quickly dry out hands and poses a hazard if ingested. Do not use sanitizer prior to eating because ingestion can occur.
- Sanitizers don't get rid of all types of germs.
- Hand sanitizers are not as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.
- Hand sanitizers don't remove all harmful chemicals or germs.

# Use Hand Sanitizer When You Can't Use Soap and Water

## Soap and Water

- **Before, during,** and **after** preparing food
- **Before** eating food
- **Before** and **after** caring for someone who is sick with vomiting or diarrhea
- **Before** and **after** treating a cut or wound
- **After** using the toilet
- **After** [changing diapers, or cleaning up a child who has used the bathroom](#)
- **After** touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- **After** handling pet food or pet treats
- **After** touching garbage
- If your hands are visibly dirty or greasy

## Alcohol-based Hand Sanitizer

- **Before** and **after** visiting a friend or loved one in a hospital or nursing home, unless the person is sick with *Clostridioides difficile* (if so, use soap and water to wash hands).
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains **at least 60% alcohol**, and wash with soap and water as soon as you can.

**DO NOT** use hand sanitizer if your hands are visibly dirty or greasy—for example, after gardening, playing outdoors, fishing, or camping. If a handwashing station is available, wash your hands with soap and water instead.

**After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, you should clean your hands by immediately washing your hands with soap or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer to avoid spreading germs.**

## Safe Use of Hand Sanitizers – CAUTION!

- Swallowing alcohol-based hand sanitizers can cause alcohol poisoning if more than a couple of mouthfuls are swallowed!
- Hand Sanitizer use by young children requires close adult supervision!
- Immediately rub hand sanitizer into your skin. Alcohol vapors can ignite or flash if exposed to an ignition source, switches, or any item with a static electrical charge. Putting your hands near an open flame before hand sanitizer has fully evaporated could cause a burn hazard!
- **FDA is warning** consumers and health care providers that the agency has seen a sharp increase in hand sanitizer products that are labeled to contain ethanol (also known as ethyl alcohol) but that have tested positive for methanol contamination. Methanol, or wood alcohol, is a substance that can be toxic when absorbed through the skin or ingested and can be life-threatening when ingested. A list of these products (all from Mexico) can be found at <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/drug-safety-and-availability/fda-updates-hand-sanitizers-methanol>

# Hand Sanitizing Dispensers

- CDC recommends that Alcohol Based Hand Sanitizers (ABHS) contain at least **60% alcohol**
- Dispensers shall be separated from each other by horizontal spacing of **not less than 48 inches**
- Dispensers may not be installed above, to the side or beneath an ignition source within a horizontal distance of **1 inch**
- Dispensers shall not release content except when activated and any activation shall only occur within **4 inches**
- Dispensers shall not dispense more solution than the amount required for hand hygiene consistent with label instructions

# Hand Sanitizer Storage

- **NFPA 30, table 9.6.2.1 prohibits storing hand sanitizers in classroom(s) or office(s).**
- Only one in-use container may be brought into the classroom in accordance with NFPA regulation. Again, storage of hand sanitizer in any classroom is prohibited!



# Hand Sanitizer Storage Requirements

- For storage rooms that are **extensions of classrooms and intended for storage of materials related to education:**
  - Special Occupancy Limits apply!
  - Up to **10 gal** of Hand sanitizer can be stored outside of a flammable locker in a storage room that has fire rated walls /door
  - Up to **180 gal** of hand sanitizers can be stored in a storage room that has fired rated walls/door inside a flammable storage cabinet
- For fire rated rooms that are intended for custodial or general storage not related to education:
  - Special Occupancy Limits **DO NOT** apply
  - If the storage room is on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor of the building
    - Up to **120 gal** can be stored outside of a flammable cabinet
    - Up to **240 gal** can be stored inside flammable cabinets, inside a storage room
    - Up to **480 gal** can be stored inside flammable cabinets, inside a storage room with a sprinkler system
    - If a fire rated storage room is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 75% of maximum quantities for a 1<sup>st</sup> floor can be stored

# Hand Sanitizer Storage - Flammable Liquid Storage Cabinets

- Flammable liquid storage cabinets shall include the following markings, “**FLAMMABLE** (minimum letter height, 2 in.) **KEEP FIRE AWAY** (minimum letter height, 1 in.), uppercase and in contrasting color to the background.
- Marking shall be on the upper portion of the cabinet’s front door(s) frame.
- At least one fire extinguisher not less than 40:B shall be located outside of but not more than 10 ft. from the door into the storage area
- Requirements are in alignment with NFPA 101, Life Safety Code and NFPA 30, Flammable Liquids Handling

## Other Considerations...

- Automated dispensers require batteries that will have to be frequently replaced. Please account for the cost, replacement, safe storage and disposal of batteries.
- Secure storage and accountability of sanitizer and batteries will be required to maintain sufficient inventory.
- Consult with your District Safety Officer and the Installation Fire Department on procedures for the safe refill and storage of alcohol based hand sanitizer to ensure proper use and fire safe storage.