

ANTIMICROBIAL POLICY

Antimicrobials by definition are pesticides. They are regulated by both the California Department of Pesticide Regulation as well as Cal-OSHA. For the school district this policy deals with the sanitizing and disinfecting cleaning agents used at our sites. Other policies deal with pesticide application in the Integrated Pest Management program.

I. Immediate and Long Term Hazards

Most antimicrobials do not pose an inhalation hazard if used as indicated. However, if an aerosol mist were to be inhaled, it may be irritating to the respiratory system. This is a rare concern.

The majority of the antimicrobial products cause skin and eye irritation. Depending on the product, this can range from a mild dermatitis or eye irritation to severe skin burns and permanent eye damage. Concentrated products are much more hazardous than diluted solutions. Care should be taken when mixing and diluting. Eye and skin protection (gloves) should always be worn.

Products containing bleach solutions should **never** be mixed with any other cleaning product. This is especially true for mixing bleach with ammonia and/or acidic products. Mixing these materials can produce toxic gases of sufficient strength to create a serious inhalation hazard.

II. Safety Procedures to Use

- Only authorized and trained personnel may mix, use or dispense antimicrobial products.
- Personnel shall wash immediately after direct contact with an antimicrobial product.
- Read the label before using the product.
- Read the material safety data sheet (MSDS) before using the product and make sure it is available in case of emergency.
- Mix products in a location where children are not present and follow mixing instructions exactly as indicated on the label.
- Never add extra amounts of concentrate for a “stronger effect.”
- Label all secondary containers.
- Keep records of the amount of product you use.
- Always wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

Never mix any cleaning product with another product.

III. Clothing and Protective Equipment

Eye protection and gloves must always be worn whenever using an antimicrobial product – no matter if the label does not require them, California law does. Eye protection may include goggles or a face shield. Safety glasses are not appropriate protection unless they are equipped with brow and temple protection and are specifically designated for use with liquids.

An apron may be necessary to protect clothing during mixing of strong concentrates.

IV. Procedures for Handling Emergency Situations

In most cases, the employee should contact his/her supervisor immediately. If a spill occurs, the employee should be informed of the appropriate methods to contain or cleanup the spill. Generally, only spills of a concentrated product are of real concern.

- Spills are often very slippery so use caution while containing the spill.
- Prevent additional discharge of the material.
- Keep any unnecessary personnel away from the area.
- Dike or contain the spill with materials such as absorbent cloths, towels, sand or soil.
- Consult the MSDS and/or label and dispose of the product properly.

V. Overexposure

Skin and eye irritation are the two most common health hazards associated with using antimicrobials. Exposure to skin and eyes is very easy given the nature of use. The products may be sprayed, splashed, or spilled causing direct contact with skin and/or eyes.

If an antimicrobial is accidentally ingested, a burning sensation may be experienced. Never induce vomiting unless specifically directed by a physician to do so.

VI. Emergency Medical Treatment

Know which medical facility your district has designated to provide medical treatment if necessary. If you do not know, ask your supervisor.

VII. Label Requirements, MSDS, and PSIS Leaflets

A copy of the registered label must be available at the use site. If a product is to be temporarily stored in a container other than the original container, it must be marked with the name and address of the firm responsible for the container, the identity of the antimicrobial and the toxicity signal word.

In all cases, the label must be followed. **The label is the law.**

Employees must be given information regarding how to read an MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet).

Applicable PSIS (Pesticide Safety Information Series) leaflets must also be covered in the training session. The applicable leaflets include N1, N2, N4, and N8.

VIII. Decontamination

The need for **immediate** decontamination should be stressed. With regard to the use of antimicrobial products, decontamination involves a complete flushing with water. In the case of eye contact, flushing should continue for a minimum of 15 minutes.

If the undiluted product is spilled, remove the affected clothing as soon as possible. Rinse affected skin for a minimum of 15 minutes.