MITIGATING SAFETY RISK IN A TIME OF PANDEMIC - GUIDANCE ON PREPARING WORKPLACES FOR COVID-19

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HI! LET ME INTRODUCE MYSELF

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Experience working at the local level for a health department and working in an outbreak lab for the CDC
Steps All Employers Can Take to Reduce Workers' Risk of Exposure to COVID-19

Managing surface decontamination

Implementation of Workplace Controls and Safe Work Practices (Including PPE for employees and considerations for safely switching to an alternate types)

Important Considerations for Creating an Infectious Disease Outbreak Response Plan

Long term planning for employee safety
OBJECTIVES (CONTINUED)

- How to disinfect an office or factory when a worker contracts COVID-19
- Develop Policies and Procedures for Prompt Identification and Isolation of Sick People, if Appropriate
- OSHA Recordkeeping Requirements
- What to do when an employee tests positive for COVID-19
**HOW WILL THIS OUTBREAK POTENTIALLY AFFECT A BUSINESS?**

**Absenteeism** - workers may need to take leave due to sickness, to care for sick family members, care for children while schools are closed, or socially distance due to caring for immunocompromised family members.

**Changes in commerce** - Commerce patterns will be affected by changes in demand for items:

- What does your business provide right now?
- How could you shift to something needed to combat the outbreak?

**Interrupted supply/delivery** -

- Will you be able to get the supplies you need?
- Have you already experienced disruptions in shipment?
KEY STRATEGY AREAS FOR AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PLAN

- Risk Assessment
- Reducing risk of employee exposure
- Strategies related to each aspect of the Plan
- Employee involvement
- Community connections
- Prevention
- Reviewing and updating plans
- Resources

Who can help with this type of planning?

Georgia Tech MEP program:
https://gamep.org/ for the business side of planning

Georgia Tech OSHA Consultation Program:
www.oshainfo.gatech.edu for the health and safety side of planning
Develop an Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Plan

1. Where, how, and to what sources of SARS-CoV-2 might workers be exposed:
   1. Public
   2. Customers
   3. Coworkers
   4. Sick individuals

2. Non-Occupational Risk Factors at home and in the community

3. Workforce individual risk factors: age, preexisting medical conditions, immunocompromised, pregnancy

4. What controls can be implemented to control those risks?
Engineering controls involve making changes to the work environment to reduce work-related hazards.

Work practice controls are procedures for safe and proper work that are used to reduce the duration, frequency or intensity of exposure to a hazard.

Administrative controls include controlling employees' exposure by scheduling their work tasks in ways that minimize their exposure levels.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) includes all clothing and other work accessories designed to create a barrier against workplace hazards.
STEPS ALL EMPLOYERS CAN TAKE TO REDUCE WORKERS’ RISK OF EXPOSURE TO SARS-COV-2

Consider:

- Revising sick leave policy
- Do NOT require sick note from Dr.
- Stagger work shifts
- Downsize operations
- Social distancing at work
- Cross-training Workers for different jobs to continue operations or deliver surge services
COMMUNICATION – CLEAR IS KIND

STEP 1: Designate a communications coordinator
STEP 2: Designate a spokesperson
STEP 3: Identify communication needs
   A. Identify target audiences
   B. Identify communications goals
   C. Determine key messages
   D. Determine targeted messages per audience
   E. Identify materials needed
STEP 4: Create a communications plan
   A. Determine information dissemination channels
   B. Identify media and communications resources
   C. Prepare first announcement
   D. Establish update procedures
   E. Prepare talking points
STEP 5: Monitor information flow and public response

- **The Research:**
  https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4504362/table/tbl3/?report=objectonly

- **The Practice:**

- **The Training:**
  https://www.who.int/risk-communication/training/Module-B3.pdf
STEPS ALL EMPLOYERS CAN TAKE TO REDUCE WORKERS’ RISK OF EXPOSURE TO SARS-COV-2

Promote frequent hand washing for:
- Workers
- Visitors
- Customers

Educate About Respiratory Etiquette

Provide Trash Receptacles for Tissues

Discourage use of other peoples work stations
DEVELOP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR PROMPT IDENTIFICATION AND ISOLATION OF SICK PEOPLE

- Prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals
- Employers should inform and encourage employees to self-monitor for signs of COVID-19
- Policies and procedures for employees to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.
- Make sure contractors and temp agencies are all following the same policies and procedures
- Disinfect surfaces and worksites
Actively encourage sick employees to stay home:

Employees who have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) should notify their supervisor and stay home.

Sick employees should follow CDC-recommended steps. Employees should not return to work until the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.

Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and follow CDC recommended precautions.
Identify where and how workers might be exposed to COVID-19 at work:

- See OSHA COVID-19 external icon webpage for more information on how to protect workers from potential exposures and guidance for employers pdf icon external icon, including steps to take for jobs according to exposure risk.

- Be aware that some employees may be at higher risk for serious illness, such as older adults and those with chronic medical conditions. Consider minimizing face-to-face contact between these employees or assign work tasks that allow them to maintain a distance of six feet from other workers, customers and visitors, or to telework if possible.
Separate sick employees:

- Employees who appear to have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) upon arrival at work or who become sick during the day should immediately be separated from other employees, customers, and visitors and sent home.

- If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The fellow employees should then self-monitor for symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath).

PREPARE TO IMPLEMENT BASIC INFECTION PREVENTION MEASURES

Persistence of Coronavirus on Surfaces

Plastic: 5 days
Aluminum: 2-8 hours
Surgical Gloves: 8 hours
Steel: 48 hours
Wood: 4 days
Glass: 4 days
Paper: 4-5 days

Note: Coronavirus activity may be impacted by temperatures higher than 60°F (32°C). Authors also confirm that coronaviruses may be effectively wiped away by household disinfectants. COVID-19 was NOT included in this study.
DISINFECTION OF SURFACES

CLEANING FOR COVID-19

COVID-19 (novel coronavirus 2019) is a respiratory illness that primarily spreads through the air and through personal contact with surfaces and infected people. COVID-19 is an enveloped virus, meaning it is easily compromised by proper cleaning and sanitizing. It is unknown how long COVID-19 can survive on surfaces, but it is recommended to clean and sanitize high contact surfaces at home, school, and the workplace.

- Remove visible soil and dirt from surfaces using soap and water.
- Apply an EPA registered disinfectant to kill pathogens, including COVID-19. Common cleaners include:
  - Clorox Disinfecting Wipes
  - Lysol Brand Bleach Multi-Purpose Cleaner
  - Purell Multi Surface Disinfectant
- For effective sanitizing, wait the proper contact time as indicated on the product label.

WASHOE COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT
ENHANCING QUALITY OF LIFE

For more information on COVID-19, go to www.cdc.gov/COVID19 or www.washoecounty.us/COVID19
For a full list of COVID-19 fighting products, go to: https://www.americanchemistry.com/Novel-Coronavirus-Fighting-Products-List.pdf
**DISINFECTING YOUR FACILITY IF SOMEONE IS SICK**

- Close off areas used by the sick person.
- Open outside doors and windows.
- Wait 24 hours (or as long as possible) before cleaning.
- Educate Workers Performing Cleaning.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the sick person.
What other surfaces need cleaning?

- Forklift seat and wheel
- Breakroom
- Microwave
- Fridge
HOW TO DISINFECT SURFACES

Wear disposable gloves when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces.

Clean hands immediately after gloves are removed.

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. Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
  – 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or
  – 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

For soft (porous) surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes, remove visible contamination if present and clean with appropriate cleaners.
## USE EPA REGISTERED DISINFECTANTS

List N: Products with Emerging Viral Pathogens AND Human Coronavirus claims for use against SARS-CoV-2

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<th>Active Ingredient/s</th>
<th>Product Name</th>
<th>Company</th>
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<td>RTU</td>
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KEY NOTES ABOUT DISINFECTION

- Read instructions from manufacturer
- Provide personal protective equipment for employees performing disinfection and sanitation tasks
- Provide training on the hazardous chemicals
- Keep up to date with any changes or new recommendations published as we learn more about COVID-19
- Remember- concentration and set time are VERY important!
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- Take stock of what your employees must use to protect from hazards
- Determine if there are shortages expected for needed PPE
- Work with suppliers to determine alternate sources or types of PPE for employees
- Work on Engineering controls to reduce exposure to remove the need for PPE
- Consider switching from N95s to Half Mask Respirators

Elastomeric respirators for workers who may have to decontaminate and re-use respirators in case of a shortage of N95s.
OSHA guidance

- OSHA has developed resources with information for workers and employers on how to stay healthy during the outbreak.

- The website and guidance publication includes information on implementing the hierarchy of controls when workers have specific exposure risks.

www.osha.gov/COVID-19
Existing OSHA standards protect workers from exposure

- Follow existing OSHA standards to help protect workers from exposure to and infection with COVID-19.
- Employers should also remember that OSHA can use the General Duty Clause, Section 5(a)(1), of the Occupational Safety and Health Act to ensure that workers are protected from recognized safety and health hazards that may cause serious harm.

Relevant OSHA requirements

- Personal Protective Equipment (29 CFR 1910 subpart I), including:
  - PPE General Requirements (1910.132)
  - Eye and Face Protection (1910.133)
  - Respiratory Protection (1910.134)
- Bloodborne Pathogens (29 CFR 1910.1030)
- Recordkeeping (29 CFR part 1904)

www.osha.gov/COVID-19
OSHA Enforcement

OSHA:

- Typically responds to emergencies, including disease outbreaks, in a technical assistance posture.
- Provides compliance assistance to employers to help ensure workers are protected.
- Provides technical assistance and support to other federal agencies, as well as state/local partners.

OSHA enforcement authority

- During emergency response operations, even when OSHA is operating in a technical assistance and support mode, OSHA standards remain in effect and OSHA retains its ability to enforce the OSHA standards under the OSH Act.
- Enforcement of OSHA standards follows the jurisdiction in place before the emergency, such as in states operating OSHA-approved occupational safety and health programs called State Plans.

www.osha.gov/COVID-19
OSHA Enforcement

- Lots of Temporary Enforcement Guidance
- Updated on a daily basis
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

We are compiling a survey to share results with GaMEP and NextGeneration Mfg

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VNZ7BVT
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We are available for individual conference/web-based conference calls

Georgia Tech OSHA Consultation Program- free-compliance assistance

www.oshainfo.gatech.edu

Georgia Tech MEP program:

https://gamep.org/