

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ANTIMICROBIAL PESTICIDES AND GENERAL PURPOSE CLEANERS

So, what is the difference between cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting?

With the variety of cleaning products on the market today, it can be hard to tell the difference between them. Not all products in the cleaning aisle are equal! Surface sanitizers and disinfectants are pesticides that are regulated by federal and state laws. It is very important to pay close attention when using them—in fact it's the law!



Cleaning:
physically removes dirt, grime, oils, and some germs from a surface.



Sanitizing:
reduces germs on surfaces to levels considered “safe” by public health authorities

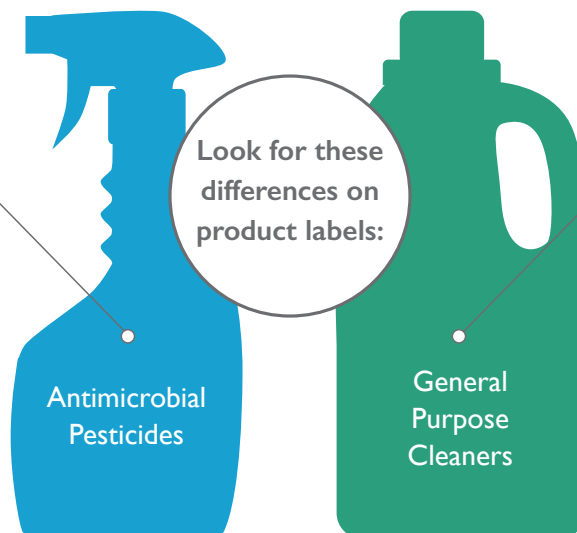


Disinfecting:
chemically destroys or inactivates almost all germs on a surface

How to tell the difference between antimicrobial pesticides and general purpose cleaners?

Antimicrobial pesticides specifically say on the label that they kill germs. General purpose cleaner labels make no mention of killing germs, but use language that says they help “clean” or “remove” soil and stains.

- Make pesticidal claims on the label Ex. “disinfectant,” “sanitizer”
- Used to kill germs on a contaminated surface
- Have instructions to kill germs
- EPA registration number on label
- Used when intent is to disinfect or sanitize



- Make no mention of germs Ex. “cleans,” “removes,” “whitens”
- Used to remove debris and marks
- No instructions to kill germs
- No EPA registration number
- Used only to clean surfaces

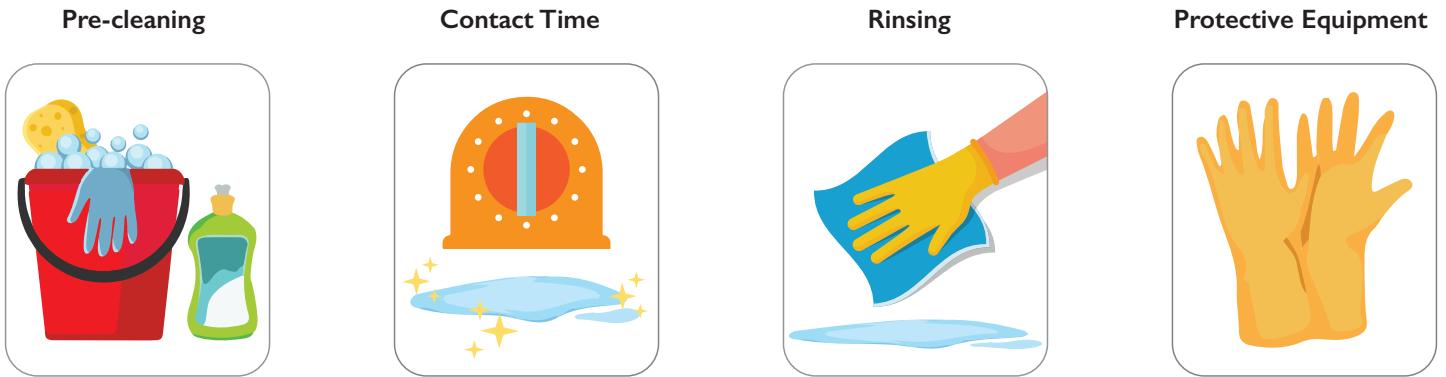
“Keep Out of Reach of Children” is not a suggestion. Students should not use antimicrobial pesticides.

Students can help to clean with general purpose cleaners or soap and water!

Use antimicrobial pesticides only when and where they are necessary.

Antimicrobial pesticides are the number one cause of pesticide-related workplace injuries. If someone gets hurt when using them, investigations and penalties may result. To reduce the risks associated with using pesticide, use antimicrobial pesticides for their intended purposes—sanitizing and disinfecting. And save the cleaners for cleaning!

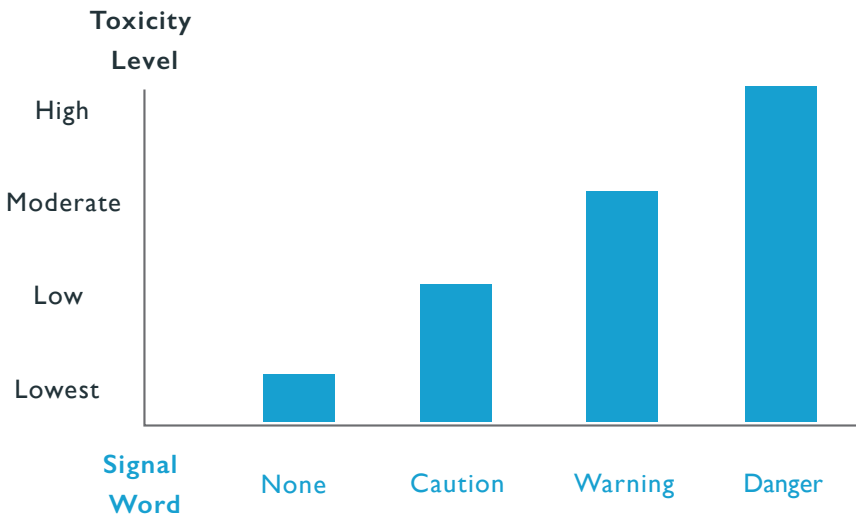
To prevent workplace injuries, follow all directions on the label. This includes requirements for pre-cleaning, contact time, rinsing, and wearing personal protective equipment. And remember, label directions are not suggestions.



Always read the label, the label is the law.

Choose products that contain lower-risk ingredients.

No products used to clean, sanitize, or disinfect are completely without risk. Because they are chemical solutions, most antimicrobial pesticides are required to have a signal word that will tell you how toxic a product is. Products with no signal word are the least toxic.



Disinfectant wipes should NEVER be used to clean hands or other parts of the body.

Resources:

DPR School and Child Care IPM Program : <http://apps.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm/>

U.S. EPA Safer Choice: <https://www.epa.gov/saferchoice>

Contact us: school-ipm@cdpr.ca.gov