Caltech

Workspace Sanitizing Protocol
For Laboratory Areas

Definitions:

- **Cleaning**: The routine process of removing visible debris, dirt, and dust by using cleaner or mechanical equipment.
- **Sanitizing**: The process of reducing the number and growth of bacteria, viruses, and fungi by using a cleaning agent in order to maintain a space safe for use.
- **Disinfecting**: The process of killing identified microorganisms and removing potential infectious material with an EPA approved chemical to prevent the spread of germs, viruses, and fungi.
- Areas must be cleaned before they can be properly sanitized or disinfected.

Purpose: This protocol describes how Caltech laboratory personnel should routinely **clean and sanitize** indoor workspaces as part of continuous spread prevention efforts implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- There is a separate protocol for disinfecting a workspace known to be contaminated (identified positive case) has been developed and managed by the Caltech Safety Office.
- Shared spaces adjacent to laboratories such as offices, kitchens, break areas, etc. will be cleaned and sanitized by custodial staff.

Social and Personnel Protective Equipment:

- Both Social Protective Equipment (cloth face coverings) and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be worn while cleaning and sanitizing..PPE includes long pants, closed-toe shoes, and lab coats. Disposable gloves should be worn when handling cleaning or disinfectant products.

Cleaning and Sanitizing Material:

- Cleaning is performed using a variety of materials and equipment available in the lab. These may include paper towels, wipes, and commercially available cleaning products.
- Laboratories operating at BSL1 or BSL2 can use their regular disinfectant solution to sanitize work surfaces: 70% ethanol or 10% bleach.
- All other laboratories can procure EPA approved cleaning agents and supplies on their own, or they may request supplies from Custodial Services. If commercial supplies are not available, a solution of 70% ethanol or 10% bleach may be used.
- EPA approved disinfectant products are those known or anticipated to kill SARS-CoV-2 when used according to manufacturing recommendations.

Cleaning Procedures:

- All indoor surfaces that are visibly soiled, dusty, or covered with debris must be cleaned prior to being sanitized.
- Work surfaces (bench tops, fume hoods, biosafety cabinets, tables, desks, etc.) in the lab and frequently touched surfaces (door handles, light switch, etc.) must be dusted and scrubbed with cloth or disposable wipes if visibly dirty.

Sanitizing Procedures:

- All surfaces used for research work (bench tops, fume hoods, biosafety cabinets) and frequently touched must be sanitized before and after research activities. If laboratory equipment or machines are used throughout the day, a "before initiating work" and an "end-of-the work-day" sanitizing process must be implemented.
- Wipe or spray surfaces, leaving the surface moist for at least one (1) minute or per manufacturer's instructions prior to wiping down completely.
    - For sensitive equipment that cannot withstand a large amount of moisture, use wipes or wetted paper towels with the maximum amount of disinfectant without compromising the equipment.
- Sanitizing should focus on all surfaces that are frequently touched:
    - Bench tops, fume hoods, biosafety cabinet surfaces, sashes, and refrigerator/freezers handles
    - Doors handles, light switches, computer stations, keyboard/monitors, phones, desks, chair arms
    - Laboratory hand tools: Pipettors, Pipettes heads
    - Waste container lids
    - Other frequently used equipment (especially controls, buttons, etc.)

After Cleaning and Sanitizing:

- Used wipes, cleaning supplies, and gloves can be discarded in regular waste.