



Disinfection After a Flood or Sewage Backup

[EPA-Registered Disinfectants for Norovirus](#) should be used to disinfect surfaces contaminated by flood water or sewage. It is extremely important that the following safety precautions are followed when using disinfectants.

- Know what disinfectant you are using and follow the manufacturer’s safety precautions (Safety Data Sheet or SDS) and instructions for use. Some disinfectant solutions can be toxic and can be harmful to the eyes, skin, and airways.
- Do not use disinfectant solution on food-contact surfaces unless the surfaces have been contaminated with flood water or sewage.
- Ensure disinfected food-contact surfaces are rinsed thoroughly of the disinfectant solution and then sanitized with an approved sanitizer (chlorine, iodine or quaternary ammonia).
- Chlorine and quaternary ammonia may be used for both disinfection and sanitization but the chemical concentration for disinfection is much higher than that used for sanitization.
- Do not use the disinfectant solution to sanitize if using the same chemical. Make a separate sanitizing solution.
- Contact times on the manufacturer's label must be followed for disinfection and sanitization to be effective.

EXAMPLE OF THE DISINFECTION PROCEDURE USING REGULAR STRENGTH (5-6%) CHLORINE BLEACH

- Use chlorine bleach in a well-ventilated area and wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as goggles, masks, gloves, and a covering for all exposed skin. Do not mix chlorine bleach with ammonia.
- Wash surfaces with hot soapy water and rinse before disinfection.
- Then sanitize any food-contact surfaces with a sanitizing solution (50-100 ppm chlorine) as indicated below.

Purpose	PPM	Dilution	Contact Time	Final Step after Disinfection
Disinfection - Nonfood Contact Surfaces	2400	¾ cup regular chlorine bleach/1 gallon water	5 minutes	Rinse thoroughly then air dry
Disinfection - Food-Contact Surfaces	2400	¾ cup regular chlorine bleach/1 gallon water	5 minutes	Rinse thoroughly then sanitize

*For concentrated (8.25%) chlorine bleach, use 1/2 cup bleach/1 gallon water for disinfection and 2 tsp bleach/1 gallon water for sanitization.

- Use only regular chlorine bleach with a sodium hypochlorite concentration of 5-6% or 8.25%. Do not use expired, scented, or splashless bleach.
- Steam cleaning may be preferable for carpets and upholstery. Chlorine bleach may permanently stain some surfaces.

Other [EPA-registered disinfectants for Norovirus](#), following manufacturer’s directions, may be used.

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