



Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Fire Protection
COVID-19 Recommended Actions and Guidance



DNRC Fire Facility and Fire Equipment Cleaning Guidance

Effective Date: **4/22/2020** or until rescinded/modified

Agency Intent

The agency intent for the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation's fire preparedness COVID-19 mitigation actions and COVID-19 precautions in the state's fire operations is:

- The DNRC's mission critical work, including suppressing wildfires, will continue with appropriate risk management strategies consistent with current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and state health safety guidelines regarding COVID-19 mitigation.
- The DNRC is committed to engaging in local and statewide COVID-19 emergency response while prioritizing and balancing our responsibilities to execute our mission critical duties.
- The best way to mitigate COVID-19 exposure throughout our fire operations is to maintain our capacity to do what we do best—succeed on initial attack, build the capacity of our local partners, and support our federal partners in doing the same.
- Community preparedness and fire prevention will play a critical role leading up to the 2020 Fire Season to reduce firefighter exposure and reduce nonessential interactions.
- Management of wildfire is inherently interagency, and we are working to align national plans with ongoing efforts across Montana and the Northern Rockies Geographic Area.

Introduction & Purpose

This guidance is to help mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 as part of a layered defense protocol that safeguards DNRC Fire Protection employees. DNRC aims to be proactive in minimizing the transmission of COVID-19 and other diseases by implementing (and increasing) regular cleaning and disinfecting practices for Fire Facilities and Equipment

Recommended Actions and Guidance

This guidance is based on information from the CDC for Cleaning and Disinfection of Community Facilities. It is intended to minimize and limit the survival of COVID-19 in the environments in which our employees operate. The following instructions apply to all DNRC fire protection facilities and equipment during the COVID-19 national emergency. This interim guidance is based on what is currently known about the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and founded on CDC recommendations for minimal to moderate community COVID-19 transmission like those occurring in the State of Montana.

DNRC cannot provide direction for every circumstance, and this protocol is intended to provide sufficient decision space to the local work unit as conditions in each area differ. There will be instances that direction/policy does not foresee and possibly even provides conflicting direction/policy. While maintaining our ability to provide mission critical services, Managers/Supervisors should use their best judgement to implement the overarching goal to do all we can to minimize and mitigate risks associated with COVID-19 for our employees, their families, and the public we serve.

Managers/Supervisors shall increase the frequency with which all fire facilities and equipment are cleaned. Appropriate disinfectant (see below) should be used to clean high-touch surfaces and equipment. Particularly close attention should be given to thoroughly cleaning all office, quarters, meeting rooms, kitchens, gyms, bathrooms, and ready rooms.



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Everyone has a personal responsibility to do their part to slow the spread of COVID-19. Cleaning and disinfecting fire facilities and equipment should be a shared responsibility among all fire protection employees. Managers/Supervisors should delegate cleaning responsibilities with the same sense of balance and fairness that they apply to assigning regular duties. Make sure employees clearly understand what is expected and provide checklists to help everyone cover details associated with their specific tasks. Employees should perform routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks, and electronics with household cleaners and EPA-registered disinfectants that are appropriate for the surface. Cleaning should be done on-shift in paid status. Remind employees to follow label instructions.

Environmental Cleaning and Disinfecting

When people touch a surface or object contaminated with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and then touch their own eyes, noses, or mouths, they may expose themselves to the virus. Early information from the CDC, the National Institutes of Health, and other study partners suggests that SARS-CoV-2 can survive on certain types of surfaces such as plastic and stainless steel for 2-3 days. The transmissibility of SARS-CoV-2 from contaminated environmental surfaces and objects is still not fully understood. As a precautionary measure Managers/Supervisors should increase work environment cleaning and disinfecting. Proactive cleaning and disinfecting of these surfaces with approved cleaners and disinfectants reduces the probability of transmission from person to person.

- **Cleaning** refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. It does not kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.
- **Disinfecting** refers to using chemicals such as EPA-registered disinfectants to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after use, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV- 2 (COVID-19)

This link from the Environmental Protection Agency provides information on disinfectants and their dwell times that can be used against COVID-19:

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

All products on this list meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. When using an EPA-registered disinfectant, follow the label directions for safe, effective use. Make sure to follow the contact time, which is the amount of time the surface should be visibly wet, listed in the table. Managers/Supervisors are encouraged to work with their local health department and suppliers to select an appropriate disinfectant as well as alternate disinfectants to be used in the event of a shortage of the primary disinfectant. When purchasing a product, verify its EPA registration number is included on this list. If it is, you have a match, and the product can be used against SARS-CoV-2. You can find this number on the product label – just look for the EPA Reg. No. These products may be marketed and sold under different brand names, but if they have the same EPA registration number, they are the same product. The products will also describe what viruses they will disinfect on the label.

Cleaning chemicals' Safety Data Sheets (SDS) and other manufacturer instructions can provide additional guidance about what PPE workers need to use the chemicals safely. Managers/Supervisors should ensure that SDS are provided and accessible to employees performing cleaning duties.

Workers who conduct cleaning tasks must be protected from exposure to hazardous chemicals used in these tasks. In these cases, the PPE and Hazard Communication standards may apply, and workers may need appropriate PPE to prevent exposure to the chemicals.



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PPE for Consideration for Employees Performing Cleaning and Disinfecting Duties

Managers/Supervisors should recommend and provide appropriate PPE ensembles for various types of cleaning and disinfecting activities that employees will perform. Ensure DNRC fire protection employees are familiar with safe work practices, the utilization of PPE, and standard precautions. In general:

- Cleaning chemicals' Safety Data Sheets (SDS) and other manufacturer instructions can provide additional guidance about what PPE workers need to use chemicals safely. Managers/Supervisors should ensure that SDS are provided and accessible to employees performing cleaning duties.
- When disposable gloves are used, workers should typically use a single pair of nitrile exam gloves. Change gloves if they become torn or visibly contaminated.
- When eye protection is needed, use goggles or face shields. Personal eyeglasses are *not* considered adequate eye protection.
- After removing PPE, always wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, if available. Ensure that hand hygiene facilities (e.g., sink or alcohol-based hand rub) are readily available at the point of use (e.g., at or adjacent to the PPE removal area).

Cleaning and Disinfecting Hard (Non-Porous) Surfaces

- 1) If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- 2) For disinfection most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
 - a) A list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 is available online.
 - b) Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products for concentration, application method, contact time, etc. Many products recommend:
 - i) Keeping surface wet for a period (see product label);
 - ii) Precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.
 - c) Additionally, diluted household bleach solutions (at least 1000ppm sodium hypochlorite) can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application, ensuring a contact time of at least one (1) minute, and allowing proper ventilation during and after application. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleaner. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
 - i) Prepare a bleach solution by mixing: five (5) tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water or four (4) teaspoons bleach per quart of water
 - ii) Use caution when cleaning with bleach and take precautions to prevent damage.
 - d) Alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol may also be used.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Soft (Porous) Surfaces

- 1) For soft (porous) surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes, remove visible contamination if present and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces. After cleaning:
 - a) If the items can be laundered, launder items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items, and then dry items completely.
 - i) Otherwise, use products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 and that are suitable for porous surfaces.



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Cleaning and Disinfecting Electronics & Radio Equipment

- 1) For electronics such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and radio equipment, first remove all visible contamination.
 - a) Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.
 - i) The DNRC Communications Shop recommends the use of ENVY Foaming Disinfectant Cleaner by DIVERSEY for cleaning radios. If this is unavailable, alcohol wipes can be used (as listed below). Do not use liquid sprays.
 - b) Consider use of wipeable covers for electronics.
 - c) If no manufacturer guidance is available, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect touch screens. Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Nomex®, Linens, Clothing, other Laundry Items

- 1) Wash items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely. Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an ill person can be washed with other people's items.
- 2) Guidance from Dupont™ for cleaning of Nomex® and Kevlar® FR/AR Apparel:
 - <https://www.dupont.com/content/dam/dupont/amer/us/en/personal-protection/public/documents/en/Guidance%20on%20Cleaning%20FR.AR%20Apparel.pdf>
 - [https://www.dupont.com/content/dam/dupont/amer/us/en/personal-protection/public/documents/en/Nomex\(R\)%20Aramid%20Fiber%20Laundering%20Guide.pdf](https://www.dupont.com/content/dam/dupont/amer/us/en/personal-protection/public/documents/en/Nomex(R)%20Aramid%20Fiber%20Laundering%20Guide.pdf)
- 3) Clean and disinfect hampers or other carts for transporting laundry according to guidance above for hard or soft surfaces.

Cleaning Guidance in the Event of a COVID-19 Exposure at a DNRC Facility

Should a suspected COVID-19 exposure occur at a DNRC facility, clean and disinfect environments potentially contaminated using EPA-registered disinfectants with similar methods listed above.

- a) Sick workers should leave the work site as soon as possible. Depending on the severity of the isolated worker's illness, he or she might be able to return home or seek medical care on his or her own, but some individuals may need emergency medical services. Implement the DNRC Manager Guidance for an Employee Reporting an Illness (DNRC Intranet). Notify DNRC Director's Office Duty Officer at 406.444.1430. If sending the employee home is not feasible, immediately isolate individuals suspected of COVID-19 exposure. For example, move potentially infectious individuals to isolation rooms. In other work sites, move potentially infectious individuals to a location away from workers, customers, and other visitors and with a closed door, if possible.
- b) Close off areas used by the person who is sick. Restrict access to contaminated areas and post signage, only permitting access by essential personnel. Allowing contamination to remain on non-porous surfaces during this time may permit potentially infectious viral particles to become non-infectious.
- c) Following removal of the employee, open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. Wait 24 hours before you clean or disinfect. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- d) Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who was sick, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, and remote controls.



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IAFC WEBINARS

iafc.org/covid19

Decontamination Escalation

STANDARD	CONTACT	DROPLET	AIRBORNE	VIRAL PATHOGEN
Wash hands	Wash hands	Wash hands	Wash hands	Wash hands
Clean surfaces	Clean surfaces	Clean surfaces	Clean surfaces	Clean surfaces
Disinfect surfaces (EPA-registered)	Disinfect surfaces (EPA-registered)	Disinfect all impacted areas (EPA-registered)	Disinfect all impacted areas* (EPA-registered)	Disinfect all impacted areas* (Peracetic acid-based decontamination)
		Inspect PPE for visible contamination (decon prior to doffing)	Inspect PPE for visible contamination (decon prior to doffing)	Inspect PPE for visible contamination (decon prior to doffing)

*Remember, adjacent areas could also be impacted

Fire Operations Considerations

While maintaining our ability provide mission critical services, Managers/Supervisors should use their best judgement to implement the overarching goal to do all we can to minimize and mitigate risks associated with COVID-19 for our employees, their families, and the public we serve. Wildland fire activities create an ideal environment for the transmission of infectious diseases including high-density living and working conditions, lack of access to and use of soap and sanitizers, and a mobile workforce. These and other environmental and occupational factors (e.g., smoke, heat, plants, insects, fungus, fatigue, and physically demanding work) can increase the likelihood of disease transmission. We must recognize the increased difficulty that fire operations will have on routine cleaning and disinfecting of fire equipment.

- Provide fire protection personnel with the best tools and guidance available to support their health during fire operations.
 - Maintain a sufficient inventory of disinfection supplies to be deployed to incidents with crews.
- Empower incident commanders and fire protection personnel to implement recommended actions that minimize and mitigate risk.
 - Limit sharing of apparatus, supplies and equipment amongst resources.
 - Disinfection is recommended following each operational shift. Equipment should also be disinfected prior to leaving an incident and/or returning equipment to service.
- Emphasize individual responsibility for implementing recommended personal-level actions.
 - Maintain clean PPE to prevent virus spread
 - Social distancing, sanitization, cough etiquette, etc. remain a priority on and off the fireline



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Other Facility Considerations

1. Consider installing hand sanitizer stations at all entrances to fire facilities. Provide employees training proper use of hand sanitizer.
2. Provide staff training on proper handwashing techniques. Post handwashing guidance in bathrooms and kitchen locations. <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html>
3. Keep cleaning/disinfecting supplies in easy to access locations so that they are readily available and encourage utilization.
4. Utilize bags in all trash cans.
5. Consider covering soft furniture (couches, chairs) with sheets that can be routinely laundered or replace with hard (non-porous) surfaced furniture.

Additional Resources

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility-H.pdf> (poster)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprepare%2Fcleaning-disinfection.html

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/controlprevention.html#health>

Appendices

Appendix #1—Sample Daily Facility Cleaning Checklist

Complementary Protocols

Fire Response Framework

MDT Vehicle Disinfecting Guidelines

Fire Facility-Campus Access Control Protocols



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Appendix #1 Sample Daily Facility Cleaning Checklist (Customize to Your Facility)

	AM Cleaning	PM Cleaning
Exterior Door Handles		
Handrails		
Common Use Windows		
<u>Office Spaces</u> Door Handles Handrails Phones Desks Keyboard & Mouse Chairs		
<u>Common Area/Ready Room</u> Door Handles Sinks/Faucets Coffee Pots Phones Desks Keyboard & Mouse Chairs Tables Refrigerator		
<u>Kitchen and Dining Area</u> Door Handles Sinks/Faucets Coffee Pots Drawer Handles Microwave Refrigerator Dishwasher		
<u>Bathrooms</u> Door Handles Sinks/Faucets Shower Toilet Countertops Drawer Handles		
<u>Bunkhouse</u> Door Handles Sinks/Faucets Toilet Countertops Drawer Handles		
Laundry Machines		
Fueling Station		
<u>Shop</u> Door Handles Chairs Tables Drawer Handles Tools		