

Bleach Use in Kitchens

General Plan/Approach:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), ensure products kills germs as stated on the label and assigns an EPA registration number to the product label. Only products with EPA registration numbers can make public health claims regarding sanitizing and disinfecting abilities.

Bleach used by SOCFC must be EPA registered. It must not contain additives for fragrance purposes. It is a violation of federal law to use these products in a manner inconsistent with their labeling.

Bleach can irritate the lungs and mucous membranes. It can damage skin, eyes and clothing. For staff who mix bleach solutions, contact with full strength bleach can be harmful. Bleach must be diluted to produce a use solution. The diluted solution poses less health risk to workers.

This procedure presents instructions for the use of chlorine bleach products in center kitchens only for sanitizing utensils, equipment, facilities, areas and food processing surfaces by kitchen staff.

Oregon OSHA:
OAR 437-002-1910.1200(H) Health hazard criteria

Oregon Health Authority:
Criteria for Disinfectants and Sanitizers 12/21/2014

Procedure:

All staff must read the Safety Data Sheet and the EPA label for the specific bleach product in use before using it for the first time. All safety precautions must be followed. If there are any questions or uncertainties regarding its use, please contact your supervisor or the Safety Resource Manager.

Definitions:

- **Disinfectant:** A chemical that destroys disease-causing pathogens or other harmful microorganisms. Disinfectants are generally stronger or more toxic than sanitizers and are used where there are more infectious organisms to control, like in bathroom and toilet areas or on blood-borne pathogens and body fluid cleanups.
- **Sanitizer:** Agent that reduces the number of infectious organisms to levels considered safe as determined by public health requirements. In childcare

settings, sanitizing will kill enough germs to reduce the risk of becoming ill from contact with the surface. Sanitizers are used in all classrooms and general settings.

- **Cleaning:** The process that physically removes debris from the surface or area by scrubbing, washing and rinsing. It is generally accomplished with soap and water.
- **Bleach:** A chemical product that cleans, whitens and disinfects. Chlorine bleach contains the chemical sodium hypochlorite as the active ingredient. This is the common household “bleach” that is used in SOCFC kitchens. Bleach may contain 5.25, 6.0, 8.3 or 8.5 percent sodium hypochlorite.

Dilution

1. An eyewash station is required to be available in all center kitchens for emergency use if bleach gets in someone’s eyes.
 2. Ventless safety goggles are required to be worn when mixing/diluting bleach for use.
 3. See chart on the following page for determining amounts of bleach to add to water.
 4. Chlorine test strips are required to test each batch of solution to confirm the concentration is between 50 and 100 ppm.
 5. Dilute bleach with cool water and do not use more than the recommended amount of bleach.
 6. Make a fresh bleach dilution daily. Dump any diluted bleach solution into a sink at the end of each day.
 7. Add bleach to the water rather than water to bleach to reduce fumes.
 8. Make sure the room is well-ventilated.
 9. Never mix or store ammonia with bleach or products that contain bleach.
 10. Label any new container with a compliant secondary label.
- Mixing Bleach and Water for Food Surface Sanitizing Water Bleach Strength*
5.25 – 6.25% 1 Gallon 2 Teaspoons Bleach Strength* 8.25% 1 Quart 1 Teaspoon ½ Teaspoon *Use only plain unscented bleach that lists the percent (%) strength on the manufacturer’s label. ¼ Teaspoon.

- *Use only plain unscented bleach that lists the percent (%) strength on the manufacturer's label. Read the label on the bleach bottle to determine the bleach strength. For example, Sodium Hypochlorite...6.25% or 8.25%.
- Use:
 - These use directions do not replace the use directions on the label. They are only repeated here to help users understand them.
 - Apply the bleach dilution after cleaning the surface with soap or detergent and rinsing with water.
 - Bleach must remain on all surfaces being sanitized for 2 minutes or air dry.
 - Disposable cloths are used in a bucket of bleach and water solution. They must be stored in sanitizer between uses to prevent microbial growth.
 - At the end of each day, the cloths are disposed of and the bleach water is dumped.
- **Storage and Disposal:**
 - Store bleach in a cabinet or room secured with a lock or child-proof latch. Bleach loses its sanitizing strength 6 months after purchase. Disposal is usually not necessary. Empty product containers are non-refillable and may be placed in trash bags and put in the trash.