

Special Clean-up Procedures

The Department of Health is now requiring that all food establishments have written clean-up procedures for vomiting and diarrheal events in line with new regulations in the FDA Food Code^[1]. Norovirus is highly contagious, and particles can spread through the air up to 25 feet. Only a few particles are needed to infect a person. The Department of Health provides the following guidelines for creating a written procedure^[2]:

Protect guests

1. Move guests at least 25 feet away from affected areas
2. Block access to contaminated area
3. Throw away all food in the 25 feet area as it may have been contaminated

Protect staff and volunteers

1. Staff or volunteers cleaning must wear gloves, mask, and an apron
2. Throw away or launder items after use
3. Wash hands thoroughly – hand sanitizers may **not** be effective against norovirus

Contain the spill

1. Use baking soda or other absorbent material to contain the spill

Clean up

1. Use paper towels to clean-up and throw them away in plastic trash (or biohazard bags if available) – do **not** vacuum as vacuuming can spread particles
2. Use soapy water for the spill area, surfaces close to the spill, and frequently touched areas such as faucet handles, door knobs, counters, and phones
3. Rinse thoroughly
4. Wipe dry with paper towels

Disinfect surfaces after cleaning (to remove remaining germs)

1. Use chlorine bleach for everything except fabrics and rugs
 - a. For hard surfaces uses 1/3 cup bleach (1/4 cup if concentrated) + 1 gal water
 - b. For porous surfaces use 1 – 2/3 cup bleach (1 cup if concentrated) + 1 gal water
2. Steam clean or use other disinfectants approved for food service facilities for areas that cannot be bleached:
 - a. Phenolic environmental disinfectants at 2-3 times the concentration
 - b. EPA-registered disinfectants
3. Rinse all food contact surfaces after disinfecting

What does this mean for my agency?

1. Create a clean-up kit to keep on hand. Kits should include disposable gloves, masks, aprons, paper towels, plastic bags, and baking soda.
2. Guests should be moved immediately away from the spill area.
3. All food within 25 feet of the spill should not be distributed and should be immediately discarded.
4. Member agencies should have a written clean-up procedure. This procedure can be included with the clean-up kit. A record of any clean-up actions should be kept.

^[1] Section 2-501.11 of FDA Food Code 2013

^[2] <http://www.health.ri.gov/publications/guidelines/RespondingToVomitingAndDiarrhealInFoodEstablishments.pdf>