

FOGGING DISINFECTANTS

MAINTAINING A HEALTHY FACILITY

AND PREVENTING COVID-19



For Business and Other Establishments

People in search of ways to disinfect buildings to reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19 may learn about disinfectant fogging, misting, or electrostatic spray systems and wonder if these would be a useful tool. Instead of targeting specific surfaces, these devices spray a fine mist of disinfectant into the air, which is intended to contact all surfaces in a room and disinfect them. VDH and CDC do not recommend foggers for disinfection of COVID-19, since there is insufficient evidence to support their use in businesses, their potential benefits do not outweigh their harms, and conventional cleaning and disinfection methods are safer and proven effective.

Foggers can be harmful.

The high levels of disinfectant sprayed into the air can cause breathing problems in the people applying the disinfectant. Some disinfectants can damage certain surfaces. If you use a fogger, be sure to follow the manufacturer's directions and to only use the disinfectants the manufacturer recommends. Most disinfectants will require that people not enter the room for a while afterwards so the room can air out. Re-entering the room before it has aired out properly could result in eye irritation, coughing, wheezing, and sore throat. If someone experiences these symptoms after entering a room where fogging has been done, move them to fresh air. If they are experiencing problems breathing, get emergency medical help.

Few disinfectants are approved for use against COVID-19 by fogging.

Only a few disinfectants that are effective against COVID-19 have been approved for application by fogging or electrostatic spray dispersal, and these generally require specialized equipment. Some hand-held fogging devices are available for sale that are advertised as being useful for applying a variety of disinfectants. Even if a disinfectant that is effective against the virus that causes COVID-19 during routine cleaning is used, you can't be sure that it is effective during fogging if it has not been tested by this method. To ensure disinfection is effective, choose a disinfectant from EPA's [List N: Disinfectants for Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#), and use the application methods it has been approved for.

Surfaces that are not frequently touched do not require disinfection.

Surfaces like walls and shelves that are not often touched are not a significant route of transmission of the COVID-19 virus. Fogging is intended to disinfect all accessible surfaces, but only frequently-touched surfaces pose an infection risk.

Routine cleaning and disinfection of high-contact surfaces has been shown to be effective in reducing the

risk of COVID-19. Regular cleaning and disinfection has been shown to be effective, and has fewer risks than fogging. Follow the CDC's guidance for [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#), focusing on cleaning frequently-contacted surfaces, and choose a disinfectant from EPA's [List N: Disinfectants for Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#). Choose a disinfectant appropriate for the surface being disinfected. Some surfaces, such as food contact surfaces, may require use of certain disinfectants and rinsing after disinfection.