



NEWS RELEASE

STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

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MDARD Advises Businesses, Consumers on the Sale and Use of Disinfectants

Selling, distributing unregistered disinfectants poses public safety risk

LANSING, MICH. The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) is reminding businesses and consumers how to buy and use disinfectants safely, effectively and legally. Disinfecting is an important step in preventing and reducing the spread of viruses, bacteria, and other microbes, including SARS-CoV-2, the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

Disinfectants are considered pesticides by law and are regulated by MDARD and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA has compiled [a list of products that can be used against COVID-19](#). The list is periodically updated with new information.

“It is illegal to make, sell, or give away an unregistered disinfectant and doing so puts the public’s health at risk,” said Mike Philip, Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division Director. “Making your own disinfectant by repackaging a product, or creating your own recipe and selling it, or giving it away is both dangerous and a violation of state and federal law. It also puts public health at risk when the law isn’t followed. In the case of pesticides and disinfectants, the label is the law.”

All disinfectants must be registered by MDARD and the EPA. When a virus is listed on a disinfectant label, it means the product has been tested and proven effective on that virus or similar viruses. It also means the product label contains instructions for safe, effective use.

“In most cases, people selling or distributing unregistered disinfectants are trying to be helpful, but they may actually put people at higher risk with an ineffective and potentially harmful product,” said Brian Verhougstraete, MDARD’s Pesticide Section Manager. “Only use EPA-registered disinfectants and follow the directions on the product label. You can verify a disinfectant is EPA-registered by looking for the two or three-part EPA registration number on the product label.”

A disinfectant label carries the force of law. Before using a disinfectant, confirm the surface being treated is listed on the product label. For example, if treating a bathroom fixture, non-porous surfaces should be

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listed on the label. Also, ensure the disinfectant remains visibly wet on the treated surface for the required amount of time as listed on the label. The product may have to be reapplied if it dries before the time is up.

MDARD reminds the public to:

- Never apply disinfectants to skin and do not ingest them.
- Follow "Directions for Use" on the product label.
- Never mix different disinfectants.
- Keep all people and pets away during application until the product is dry and no odor is present.
- Wash your hands after using any disinfectant, including surface wipes.
- Keep lids tightly closed when not in use.
- Follow the label's "Precautionary Statements" and directions for what personal protective equipment you should wear.
- Do not stockpile disinfectants. This can result in shortages of critical products needed for emergencies.

For additional guidance, visit the [EPA website](#) or [Michigan.gov/coronavirus](#).

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at [Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](#) and [CDC.gov/Coronavirus](#).

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