

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Disinfectants

Q. What is a hospital grade disinfectant?

A. A disinfectant that has proven efficacy against pseudomonas, salmonella, and staphylococcus according to specific EPA protocol?

Q. Can a disinfectant be a substitute for a cleaner?

A. All gross filth or heavy soil must be removed before applying any disinfectant. Soils may interfere with the normal disinfectant's properties.

Q. What disinfectants kill Clostridium?

A. Clostridium difficile is a spore and is unaffected by quats, phenolics, and bleach. Only sterilization can kill clostridium. Generally this is performed by autoclaving (high heat) the infected instruments. There has been no direct evidence for its spread on floors and walls. It is generally spread by hand contact, therefore frequent hand washing is the best way to prevent the spread of Clostridium difficile.

Q. What is the difference between antibacterial, antimicrobial and antiseptic?

A. They are very similar. Antibacterial refers to an agent that inhibits the growth of bacteria. Antimicrobial is similar except the agent also may inhibit the growth of fungi and viruses. Antiseptic refers to an agent that inhibits the growth of bacteria in or on the body; therefore all antibacterial handsoaps are also antiseptic.

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Carpet Care

Q. What is "5th Generation" carpet ?

A. From the first introduction of nylon fibers in the manufacturing of carpets, fiber producers have continually improved the quality of the nylon fiber. Each time a major improvement has been made it's classified as a new generation. We have progressed from the first generation nylon fiber, which was clear and round and actually magnified the effects of wear and soils, to the 5th generation nylon fiber which we are accustomed to today. The 5th generation nylon fiber brought the addition of a "stain resistant" chemical treatment with acid dye blockers that resist most common household and beverage stains. Betco offers a complete line of carpet cleaning products specifically designed to clean stain resistant (5th generation) carpeting.

Q. How do I get odors such as pet urine or vomit out of my carpet?

A. Using a clean white absorbent cloth blot up any excess material from the carpet. Apply Betco's FiberPRO Enzyme Deodorizer, which is designed to remove and eliminate these types of odors, to the soiled area. Allow the product to dwell for 3-5 minutes, agitate mildly with a bone scraper and blot dry. Allow the area to completely dry and extract as necessary.

Q. How often should I vacuum my carpets?

A. Frequent vacuuming is a critical piece of any effective carpet care program. Carpets hide soils very well and it's important to remove these soils quickly and routinely so they do not become deeply imbedded in the fiber which can dramatically reduce the life of your carpet. Proper walk-off matting in entrance- ways will also help keep your carpets cleaner by keeping the dirt from ever getting to your carpet.

Q. What is bonnet cleaning?

A. Bonnet cleaning is a form of "interim maintenance" which uses very little moisture to quick clean the surface of the carpet. Because little moisture is used, the carpets are returned to service quickly. Betco's BONBET Shampoo is used for this process along with one of our low speed rotary floor machines and a carpet bonnet pad.

Q. How do I determine if a carpet cleaning product is compatible with my carpet?

A. This process is known as "testing for color fastness". This is done by applying a small amount of undiluted cleaner in an inconspicuous area. Allow the product to dwell for 3-5 minutes and then blot with an absorbent white cloth. If no color has been transferred from the carpet to the cloth the carpet cleaner and the carpet are compatible.

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Hard Floor

Q. How long does freshly poured concrete need to cure before being coated?

A. At least 30 days depending on weather. Check for moisture with gauge or by placing a cardboard box on floor, wait overnight and see if dark, wet spots appear. If so, then floor is not totally cured.

Q. How do I coat over an existing epoxy coated floor?

A. Epoxy must be completely removed prior to being re-coated, usually by shot blasting, or grinding.

Q. Does concrete need to be acid etched prior to being coated?

A. Only when severely worn or deteriorated. Use AC114, multi-purpose acid cleaner and delimer, diluted at 1:10, and apply liberally. Agitate slightly until bubbles stop forming. Vacuum up all remaining solution and dry thoroughly. Surface should feel like fine sandpaper once finished.

Q. What stripper should I use for marble?

A. Use Betco Extreme, at 1:5 dilution with cool water.

Q. What finish should I use for Terrazzo floors?

A. Vibrance, does very well on medium to high maintenance floors, while Sure Cure, works well with low maintenance floors.

Q. What stripper do I use on Terrazzo floors?

A. Use Extreme no-rinse stripper, at 1:5 dilution with cool water.

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Wood Floor

Q. How do I mix finish mechanically without generating too much foam?

A. Stick stirring is sufficient with two component finishes.

Q. What do I do when cold finish gathers in viscosity and does not flow properly?

A. Allow finish to warm to room temperature before application.

Q. Why is my wood floor peeling?

A. Typically peeling occurs when the wood floor has not been properly prepared before applying finish. Two common causes are that the floor was not abraded properly or that all residues were not removed before applying the finish. Always abrade existing wood floor finishes prior to applying new layers to ensure proper adhesion. This is usually done using a standard floor machine and sand screens, 100 grit are recommended. Always screen with the grain of the wood. After this process it is important to remove all dust residue from the floor. First vacuum as much as possible and then use a wood floor cleaner solution to "tack mop" the floor thoroughly until no residue is present.

Q. Why is my finish separating over gym marking enamel?

A. After lines have been applied and are dry they must be lightly screened, vacuumed and tacked ragged prior to coating or separation can occur.

Q. Why can't I use black stripping pads instead of screen discs?

A. Always use screen disc on wood finishes. Pads will not achieve the abrasiveness required to texture the existing finish.

Q. How do I handle extreme temperature conditions such as humidity, heat or rain?

A. Rain and humidity will not allow the finish to dry properly. Wait until evening when it is cooler or when the weather clears.

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General Lab

Q. Can I mix certain products?

A. No. Once products are mixed, unintended reactions may occur which could lead to decreased effectiveness or harmful side product generation.

Q. How do I dispose of certain products?

A. Since state and local laws vary, the only way to insure that product or product residue is properly disposed of, is to check with the nearest branch of the EPA and have the MSDS ready for information purposes.

Q. Can I use a disinfectant or sanitizer on toys?

A. Since children are often likely to put items in their mouths or rub their eyes, we do not recommend that sanitizers or disinfectants be used to clean toys. Although, the products are indeed safe when used as directed, children can become sensitized, or products can be misused. We recommend cleaning toys with neutral detergent products such as pH7, then thoroughly rinsing them with potable water. This will generally remove most of the dirt and germs present on the surface, while leaving the toys residue free.

Q. What is the recommended shelf life for cleaning chemicals?

A. One year.

Q. What is the best way to remove ice melt residue?

A. For surfaces that are resistant to acid attack, we recommend Multi-Purpose Acid Cleaner or MAD, mild acid detergent. The Multi-Purpose Acid Cleaner is hydrochloric acid based and will quickly and effectively remove most salt residue. MAD is phosphoric acid based and is less prone to damaging surfaces on skin. It too, will effectively remove most salt residue but not as quickly as hydrochloric acid products. Both products should complete the job within 5 minutes. If a surface is vulnerable to acid attack, such as marble or Formica, we recommend Soap and Scum Remover It is a alkaline cleaner which will remove most salts although at a slower rate than acidic products.

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Green Cleaning

Q. What does green cleaning mean for you and to the industry?

A. Green cleaning in its most simplified form is defined as cleaning to protect health while minimizing the effect on the environment.

Q. How can I be sure I am not being duped into buying products that make untrue claims about chemical safeness?

A. Take a good look at the claims the product is making. If it looks like smoke and mirrors, it probably is. Additionally third party certification (i.e. Green Seal) insures an independent unbiased party has reviewed and certified the product.

Q. How can a maintenance manager convince upper building management to go green? What's the best way to demonstrate environmental needs?

A. Green program equals healthier employees, more satisfied tenants. A green commitment means a closer look at your overall cleaning program which will result in lower costs, greater productivity and less employee turnover. For example, compare the cost of a scrub and recoat procedure versus an entire strip out.

Q. What can being LEED certified do for my facility?

A. Excellent exposure for your facility, demonstrates a commitment to your tenants. Generally LEED buildings can offer a higher rate per square foot than their conventional counterparts.

Q. How can I get started with a green cleaning program?

A. Start small, identify major impact areas and suggest to upper management we want to do a pilot test

program with one building or one floor or one hallway...

Q. Where can I go to obtain information concerning green cleaning?

A. Several websites have excellent detailed information. To name a few:

www.greenseal.org, www.usgbc.org, www.newdream.org

Q. How can I find a distributor that will help me implement a green cleaning program?

A. Go to www.betco.com and search for a Betco Gold Distributor in your area.

Q. How much more will a green cleaning program cost me?

A. Overall you will save money, when you institute an entire green program, by looking at ways to be more productive and truly analyzing your entire cleaning operation.

Q. How do I know that green cleaning products will do as well as my current products?

A. Like anything else, try the products for yourself. The technology has advanced to the point where we can get similar results with green products than by using conventional cleaners.