CLEANING AND DISINFECTING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

MEANING OF TERMS

- **Cleaning** refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. Although cleaning does not kill germs, removing them does lower their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.
- **Sanitizing** refers to a solution or process that reduces the amount of germs on a surface.
- **Disinfecting** refers to using chemicals to kill all germs on a surface. It does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing the germs, it lowers the risk of spreading infection.
- Although sanitizing reduces the amount of contamination present on a surface, disinfecting is more effective for killing germs.
- During a biological outbreak it is recommended to **clean** and **disinfect** frequently-touched surfaces on a daily basis, including doorknobs, light switches, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.—See *g10* June p. 28.

HOW TO CLEAN

- Clean surfaces using soap and water. Practice routine cleaning of frequently-touched surfaces.
- A microfiber cloth slightly dampened with water is effective in cleaning many surfaces such as glass, counter tops, furniture, doors, etc.

HOW TO DISINFECT

- If the area is visibly dirty, clean it first with soap and water or a detergent.
- Use an EPA-registered household disinfectant.

- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- To be effective, disinfecting solutions often need to remain in contact with the surface for a specified length of time.
- Follow all safety precautions, such as wearing gloves and ensuring good ventilation.
- Other options include a solution of 4 teaspoons of bleach per quart of water or solutions that are at least 70% alcohol.
- Confirm that the bleach is intended for disinfecting and is not past its expiration date.
- Wash your hands immediately after removing gloves.

For additional information see:

- CDC — Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Home