

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Healthy Green Schools & Colleges Releases COVID-19 Disinfecting Guidelines

Guidance co-developed with leaders in green cleaning and facilities management from schools and universities nationwide

Washington, DC – As schools consider COVID-19 disinfection regimens that can unintentionally expose students and staff to health risks from hazardous chemicals, Healthy Green Schools & Colleges today released [Guidelines for Safer COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfection](#) that spell out effective and responsible cleaning practices for health and safety during the pandemic.

The Guidelines were developed by global nonprofit eco-certifier Green Seal® and pioneering advocacy nonprofit Healthy Schools Campaign in partnership with recognized leaders in green cleaning and facilities management at schools and universities across the U.S. They are based on the latest scientific understanding of the COVID-19 virus and build on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Disinfectants can harm instead of help

[Health experts caution](#) that repeated or extended exposures to disinfectant chemicals can lead to significant health effects, especially for vulnerable populations including children. Some common disinfectant ingredients, such as quaternary ammonium compounds, are linked to asthma and reproductive toxicity.

Excessive chemical exposure poses an especially grave risk for the 1 in 13 Americans with asthma – a group the CDC has [identified](#) as high-risk for COVID-19. Choosing safer proven-effective products, especially those that do not contain asthmagens or respiratory irritants, is critical for protecting high-risk groups. The Guidelines identify the eight safest active ingredients to look for when choosing from EPA's list of approved COVID-19 disinfectants.

The Guidelines caution against using application tools such as foggers that are being marketed for controlling COVID-19, but which unnecessarily increase hazardous chemical exposure while providing no added protection against the pathogen. They clarify when and how to safely use technologies such as electrostatic sprayers and UV-C light.

Five steps for safer schools

With actionable best practices and clear infographics, the Guidelines explain how to:

1. Create an effective cleaning and disinfecting plan.
2. Ensure that cleaning personnel are properly trained.

3. Maintain sustainability and healthy indoor air.
4. Communicate the cleaning and disinfecting plan.
5. Provide safer working conditions.

"Blanketing a building in hazardous chemicals won't necessarily prevent the spread of COVID-19, but it can create significant health risks for those inside, including – ironically – serious respiratory disease" said Green Seal CEO Doug Gatlin. "After physical distancing and mask-wearing, the best tool to combat COVID-19 is accurate information. These Guidelines for safe and effective cleaning and disinfection are a handbook for schools that are committed to comprehensively protecting the health of students and staff during the pandemic."

"Schools face many challenges in providing a healthy and safe environment for students as staff as they operate in a COVID-19 environment," said Rochelle Davis, President and CEO of Healthy Schools Campaign. "Concerns over COVID-19 may cause some schools to over disinfect, potentially creating other health problems, wasting valuable resources or creating a false sense of security. These guidelines offer evidence-based recommendations on an effective and responsible program for maintaining a healthy clean environment for students and staff."

Learn more and download Healthy Green Schools & Colleges' Guidelines for COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfection [here](#).

About Healthy Green Schools & Colleges

Healthy Green Schools & Colleges is a partnership between Healthy Schools Campaign and Green Seal® to create verifiable programs that enable facilities managers to transform the health and environmental quality of schools and universities nationwide through effective and responsible cleaning and facilities management. Learn more at www.healthygreenschools.org.

About Green Seal, Inc

Green Seal® is a global nonprofit organization with a mission to transform the economy for a healthier, greener world. Since 1989, Green Seal has applied rigorous standards for health, environmental sustainability and product performance to its certification programs to empower better purchasing decisions. Green Seal has certified thousands of products, services and spaces from hundreds of leading companies including 3M, Ecolab, Georgia-Pacific, Hilton, Westin, Marriott and Staples, and is specified by countless schools, government agencies, businesses and institutions. Today, the Green Seal certification mark is a universal symbol that a product or service meets the highest benchmark of health and environmental leadership. Visit GreenSeal.org or connect with Green Seal on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

About Healthy Schools Campaign

Healthy Schools Campaign (HSC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to making schools healthier places for all students. HSC believes that health and wellness should be incorporated into every aspect of the school experience, and green cleaning is an important

component of those efforts. Founded in 2002, HSC advocates for children to have better access to nutritious school food, physical activity, school health resources, and clean air to shape their lifelong learning and health. HSC facilitates collaboration among students, parents, teachers, administrators, and policymakers to help prepare this diverse group of stakeholders to lead change for healthier schools at the school, district, state, and national levels. For more information, go to www.healthyschoolscampaign.org or follow HSC on social media at www.facebook.com/healthyschools and www.twitter.com/healthyschools.

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