

# Pesticide Products



## Using Disinfectant and Sanitizer for Your Home or Business

*Note: This publication is not an endorsement of any product.*

### How are disinfectants and sanitizers different from cleaning products?

Products that claim to disinfect or sanitize are pesticides, however products that claim to clean are not. These terms are defined as the following:

- **Disinfecting:** Kills germs on surfaces or objects.  
Example: Lysol Disinfecting Spray (EPA Reg. No. 777-99)
- **Sanitizing:** Lowers the number of germs on surfaces or objects to a determined safe level either by killing or removing them.  
Example: Purell Food Service Sanitizer (EPA Reg. No. 84368-1-84150)
- **Cleaning:** Removes grime, dirt, dust, and other impurities from surfaces.  
Example: Pledge multi-surface cleaner

### What is a pesticide?

A product that claims, states, or implies that it prevents, destroys, repels or mitigates a pest, is considered a pesticide under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).

All products intended for preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating any pest must be registered as a pesticide with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and will contain an EPA registration number on the label.

The term pest means any insect, rodent, nematodes, fungus, weed; or any other form of terrestrial or aquatic plant or animal life or virus, bacteria, or other microorganism (**except viruses, bacteria, or other microorganisms on or in humans or animals**). Depending upon where you intend to control your pest will determine whether the product you are using is a pesticide.

Products for use on or in people or animals are not considered pesticides. If a sanitizing product is to be used on or in people or animals (such as hand sanitizer), it is regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The FDA regulates hand sanitizers as over-the-counter drug products. Hand sanitizers are considered drug products because they are used to prevent disease on people.

### Who regulates pesticides in Wisconsin?

In addition to federal regulation, pesticides used and distributed in Wisconsin are regulated and registered with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). To search for products registered for use in Wisconsin, visit the pesticide database at <https://www.kellysolutions.com/wi/searchbyproductname.asp>.

### Where can I find products to use against the virus that causes COVID-19?

To find products that kill coronavirus, visit <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-coronavirus-covid-19>. This product list is not intended to be an endorsement and all products must be used according to label directions. EPA expects the products on this list to kill the coronavirus that causes COVID-19, because they demonstrate the following:

- Effectiveness against the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19);
- Effectiveness against a pathogen that is harder to kill than SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19); or
- Effectiveness against a different human coronavirus similar to SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19).

If using a disinfectant product against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), review EPA's six steps for safe and effective disinfectant use available at

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-04/documents/disinfectants-onepager.pdf>.

## Where do I find information to safely use a pesticide?

Read the pesticide label before using the product. The pesticide product label contains information for how to use the product correctly and legally as well as contains information on potential hazards from using the product. It also includes directions for what to do in the event of a spill or poisoning. The National Pesticide Information Center has more information about how to read pesticide labels at <http://npic.orst.edu/health/readlabel.html>.

Not only is it important to read the pesticide product label, but it is important to ensure you are using the product in a safe manner. Pesticide safety depends on selecting the appropriate product for your need, wearing correct protective clothing, and using the product according to the label directions. Visit the National Pesticide Information Center for more information about safe use practices at <http://npic.orst.edu/health/safeuse.html>.

## Is it safe to use a recipe found online to make my own “natural” pesticide?

DATCP strongly urges you to reconsider this. Although home remedies may look appealing, they can cause potential harm to humans, pets and plants, may not be effective, do not come with use instructions, and could violate federal law. Know the risks of pesticide home remedies, explained in detail by the National Pesticide Information Center at <http://npic.orst.edu/pest/home-remedies.html>.

## What if I hire someone to clean my property?

If you are considering hiring someone to clean, sanitize, or disinfect your property, applicators are required to comply with federal pesticide regulations. Mostly, this is accomplished by following pesticide product label directions for use. Wisconsin pesticide regulations exempts individuals and businesses using germicides, sanitizers, and disinfectants from the commercial pesticide applicator certification and licensure requirements. However, when they are using a restricted use pesticide these requirements do apply.

You should consider the following when reviewing an individual or business for hire:

- If an individual or business is claiming to control microscopic organisms or viruses on surfaces with a product, that product must be registered as a pesticide with the EPA. To know if a product is registered you can request an EPA registration number for the product and verify registration using DATCP’s pesticide database at <https://www.kellysolutions.com/wi/searchbyproductname.asp>. If the individual or business is making false pesticide claims about an unregistered product, it is a violation of federal law.
- Individuals and businesses must use the EPA registered product according to the label directions.
- If an individual or business is making claims to treat against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), ensure the product they intend to use is listed on EPA’s list at <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-coronavirus-covid-19>.
- Individuals or businesses claiming to only provide cleaning services are not required to use EPA registered sanitizers and disinfectants.

## Where can I find more information?

For more information:

- Visit [https://datcp.wi.gov/pages/programs\\_services/pesticidesproducts.aspx](https://datcp.wi.gov/pages/programs_services/pesticidesproducts.aspx)
- Call (608) 224-4548
- Email [datcppesticideinfo@wi.gov](mailto:datcppesticideinfo@wi.gov)

