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DISINFECTANTS FOR USE IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY

AUGUST 2014 UPDATE

Guidance on the use of disinfectants is given in the Food Standards Agency (FSA) Guidance for food business operators and enforcement authorities – *E.coli* 0157 Control of Cross-Contamination.

This guidance applies to all food businesses that handle raw and ready-to-eat foods, where control measures are necessary to manage the risk of cross-contamination with *E.coli* 0157 (Ref: Clause 1.1).

The procedures for cleaning and disinfection detailed in Section 3 clearly state that a two stage process is required. The disinfectant standards that products should conform to are specified as BS EN 1276¹ or BS EN 13697².

Bactericidal Washing up Liquids

The term washing-up liquid is not used in the guidance but it is a term widely used and generally meant to refer to manual washing of used crockery and utensils after use. Products sold as washing-up liquids are detergents designed to remove fatty food residues from the surfaces of food utensils.

There is no legal requirement to use bactericidal washing up liquids in food business premises. However, some authorities in Scotland do ask for bactericidal washing up liquids to be used. The following paragraph aims to explain the reasons why the term bactericidal washing up liquid **should not** be used:

The appropriate European Test Standard for a washing up liquid claiming bactericidal activity is EN 1276 - this method requires a product to produce a 5 log reduction (99.999%) in numbers of four bacteria (*Enterococcus hirae*, *Escherichia coli*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, and *Staphylococcus aureus*) when applied in suspension for a 5 minute contact time at 20°C, under simulated use conditions (dirty for washing up liquids). Most surface disinfectants designed for use in food premises will pass EN 1276 under dirty conditions at between 1:10 and 1:100. **Washing up liquids are typically used at dilutions of around 1:600 and it is not possible for these to pass EN 1276 at this rate. If products cannot kill the bacteria when being used as a washing up liquid, bactericidal claims are irrelevant.**

¹ Quantitative suspension test for the evaluation of bactericidal activity of chemical disinfectants and antiseptics used in food, industrial, domestic and institutional areas (phase 2/step 1)

² Quantitative non-porous surface test for the evaluation of bactericidal and/or fungicidal activity of chemical disinfectants used in food, industrial, domestic and institutional areas — Test method and requirements without mechanical action (phase 2/step 2)



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Cleaning and disinfection in sinks

The updated FSA guidance states that heat disinfection is the most reliable way to kill *E.coli* O157. If heat disinfection is not available then the following procedure should be used:

Pre-clean remove residues

Main clean wash in sink with hot water and detergent (Evans recommend Q'DET)

Rinse

Disinfect in the sink with clean water and an appropriate food safe disinfectant for the required contact time (Evans recommend CHLOR-TABS* 1 tablet in 8 litre of water with a 5 minute contact time)

CHLOR TABS pass EN 1276 at the recommended dilution and contact time

Second rinse in the sink with hot water

Dry ideally air dry or with single use drying cloths

Cleaning sinks after use

After using a sink for cleaning and disinfection, the sink, taps and surrounding area should be disinfected with a food safe disinfectant (Evans recommend EST-EEM* at a 1:25 dilution, or EC4 SANITISER at a 1:60 dilution, apply as a spray and leave for 30 seconds before wiping with a paper towel)

EST-EEM passes EN 1276 under dirty conditions at 1:25 with a 30 second contact time.

EC4 SANITISER passes EN 1276 under dirty conditions at 1:60 with a 30 second contact time.