

Coronavirus(COVID-19)

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I know a product is effective against coronavirus?

Ask to see the test report confirming it has virucidal activity. EN 14476 should have been performed with vaccinia virus for enveloped viruses. If so then it is acceptable to claim effectiveness against Coronavirus. The other viruses in this test method are Polio, Adeno virus and Murine norovirus. If all three viruses have been tested and passes achieved, then the product is virucidal and will be a far more effective product with a broader spectrum.

Are there any exceptions?

Yes, hand sanitisers which contain more than 60% alcohol (ethanol, Isopropanol or a mixture). According to Public Health England and WHO advice, if the company are using the WHO recommended formula of ethanol or isopropanol/hydrogen peroxide/glycerol no testing is required. Previous tests with EN 1500 proved effectiveness.

Also, products capable of producing 1,000ppm chlorine (see page 2 'Which products are effective?').

Is there a difference between the efficacy of Ethanol and Isopropanol (IPA)?

No, formulations containing either Ethanol or IPA will be effective against a range of microorganisms including bacteria, yeasts and viruses. Neither active is effective against bacterial spores. Evans Handsan contains 70% IPA. It has been tested against vaccinia virus and is effective against Coronaviruses.

"New to market" formulations prepared with Ethanol have been launched to combat the spread of Coronavirus during the worldwide pandemic. They are only required to be manufactured according to the WHO formulation and are not required to meet any regulation at the present time. HSE and HMRC have allowed this exception, as alcohol hand sanitisers are considered an important step in the control of the virus.

Ethanol has not been approved as a biocide for BPR whereas IPA has approval (Evans' Handsan approval number: UK-2019-1195-0001). Decisions will be made at some point for these new formulations to be regulated, either by biocides or cosmetic regulations.

Viscosity of these formulations will vary from a liquid with a low viscosity, to gels with a higher viscosity. The value of viscosity changes with shear rate. Viscosity over a range of shear rates is usually quoted for a Brookfield viscometer in terms of the speed of rotation terms of the spindle in revolutions per minute (rpm). Evans use the value determined at a relatively high speed of rotation of 30 rpm and spindle 3, from the range available from Brookfield, on the grounds that the shear rate represented by that speed of rotation is appropriate to the shear experienced when a dispenser is used.

What are EN test methods?

EN disinfectant test methods are used to assess the effectiveness of a product against bacteria, fungi, viruses etc. They have been developed over several years to ensure all European countries will use the same methods / techniques / conditions to evaluate products. The methods are quantitative, very detailed and specific to each area. The techniques used mimic practical applications but under laboratory conditions. There are two types of test method suspension and surface.

Examples of suspension tests EN 1276 EN 1650, EN 13727, EN 13624, EN 14476
Examples of surface tests EN 13697, EN 16615



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Why has EN 14476 been used to prove effectiveness?

It is a medical area method and has been used as there is not an equivalent food, industrial, institutional etc version available. EN 14476 is a virucidal disinfectant test method that includes test conditions for surface disinfection.

What log reductions are required for a pass?

It depends on the test method e.g. a 5-log reduction is required for EN 1276, and a 4-log reduction should be achieved with EN 14476.

What is a log reduction?

A reduction in microbial numbers must be seen when compared to the number of organisms at the start of the test or, for surface tests, to a water control performed at the same time. As the numbers are exponential it is generally accepted that numbers are expressed as a logarithm. The reduction can be written as either a log value or a percentage i.e. a 5-log reduction is equivalent to a 99.999% reduction, a 3-log reduction is equivalent to 99.9% reduction. e.g. a surface with 1,000,000 bacteria treated with a product that kills 99.9% of bacteria would still have 1,000 bacteria remaining. If the surface was treated with a product that kills 99.999% of bacteria only 10 bacteria would remain.

Why is the product name different on the report?

The same product could be marketed under different names, a clarifying document to this effect should be obtained. A concentrate may have been tested but a dilution of the concentrate is marketed. The pass dilution of the concentrate should be checked to ensure it is the correct dilution for the diluted version. If the correct product name is not on the report and there is no clarifying documentation why it is different, then there is no evidence to show the product has been tested and is effective.

Why is SARs-Cov-2 stated on some literature?

Coronavirus is the family name of the virus and it includes other viruses e.g. MERS. There are animal and human coronaviruses. SARs-Cov-2 is the virus name of this current outbreak and COVID-19 is the name of the disease it causes. No-one has tested SARs-Cov-2 so this would claim would be untrue, as the virus hasn't yet been released for testing. Vaccinia has been used to test virucidal efficacy as it is a virus from the same family of enveloped viruses as SARS-Cov-2 and is therefore expected to behave in the same way. Previous work/studies performed with SARS has been used to show the spread of virus.

Which Evans products are effective?

All virucidal products or products with a vaccinia test result. i.e. EC4 New Formulation, Safe Zone Plus, Handsan, Vanoquat, Peroxy Disinfectant.

Bleach products are also included based on the GOV.UK website guidelines which state 1,000ppm chlorine will be effective. i.e. Evans Chlor tabs, Evans Chlor liquid, Cyclone, Cyclone spray.

What should I do if a supplier cannot provide the relevant data, but continues to market the product as effective against Corona virus?

To claim a product is effective against Coronavirus without the correct supporting data is fraudulent and puts your employees and customers at risk of contracting COVID-19, as the product will not kill SARS-Cov-2 as claimed by the supplier. If a such a case is discovered, then a complaint can be made to the local trading standards office for them to investigate. This is also the case for any cosmetic product with unsupportable claims.



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Not all biocidal products have been authorised through BPR. Once they are then it will be the responsibility of HSE to investigate fraudulent claims.

Alcohol and Iodine have been through the process and we have their authorisation numbers on products e.g. Handsan and FAM 30. Eventually all products containing biocides will be authorised. It is a requirement of the regulations that this unique authorisation number appears on the label.

At present any product containing a quaternary ammonium compound (QAC) e.g. BAC, DDAC will not be authorised for at least 2 years.

GLOSSARY

BAC

Benzalkonium chloride: a quaternary ammonium compound used in disinfectant formulations

BPR

Biocidal Products Regulation: A regulation developed across Europe for authorising biocides including pesticides, wood preservers and the largest group, disinfectants

DDAC

Didecyl dimethyl ammonium chloride: a quaternary ammonium compound used in disinfectant formulations

EN

European Norm; prefix to all disinfectant test methods. British Standards Institute publishes EN standards in the UK

HMRC

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs: a non-ministerial department of the UK Government responsible for the collection of taxes, the payment of state support and the administration of other regulatory regimes.

HSE

Health and Safety Executive: is a UK government agency responsible for the encouragement, regulation and enforcement of workplace health, safety and welfare, and for research into occupational risks in Great Britain. It is a non-departmental public body of the United Kingdom with its headquarters in Bootle

MERS

Middle East Respiratory Syndrome; a coronavirus causing respiratory disease in animals and humans

SARS

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome: a coronavirus causing respiratory disease in animals and humans



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