

May 7, 2020

### Disinfection Practices for Resilient Flooring Products

During this time of heightened sense of awareness regarding disinfection of surfaces, we wanted to provide up to date information regarding the disinfection of our flooring materials. Flooring is categorized as a **NONCRITICAL** environmental surface within Health Care environments according to the CDC due to the lack of skin contact with the flooring material. This means that Low Level Disinfection is required in these areas. We feel all spaces containing resilient flooring products should be treated the same way if end users wish to disinfect.

Despite being a noncritical surface, low level disinfection requires cleaning processes to be performed prior to any disinfection processes. Therefore, cleaning and disinfecting needs to be treated as two separate processes that make up a full maintenance program. We recommend that this maintenance program be personalized to meet your facility's specific needs. Therefore, all chemistries, equipment and processes must be safe to use on the flooring products but also meet cleaning and disinfection standards.

For optimal results when disinfecting our floor coverings, please follow the guidelines below for optimal results.

**CLEANING THE FLOORING SURFACE** as defined by the CDC removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects. Cleaning works by using soap (or detergent) and water to physically remove germs from surfaces. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

Follow the existing guidelines published in the flooring material's care and maintenance guidelines. With resilient flooring materials, a high-quality, pH neutral cleaner is always the recommended choice but in certain circumstances, other chemistry may be recommended. If there is a situation that calls for something different or something is not working properly, please contact RHC Technical at [solutions@rhctechnical.com](mailto:solutions@rhctechnical.com).

Always follow the chemical manufacturer's recommendations regarding dilution ratios and **DO NOT** let the chemistry dry at any point during this process. Remove the slurry that is created using a wet vacuum or auto-scrubbing machine. Be sure to thoroughly rinse the flooring material with clean, fresh water.

Failure to follow the above and recommended guidelines will render the disinfection process less effective as there are organic and/or inorganic materials left behind on the surface of the flooring material. Proper cleaning decreases microbial counts, allowing the disinfection process to be more efficient.

**DISINFECTING THE FLOORING SURFACE** as defined by the CDC kills germs on surfaces or objects. Disinfecting works by using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces or objects. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

After the flooring material has been scrubbed clean and is completely dry, you can begin the disinfection process. Apply an EPA Registered Disinfectant in accordance to the chemistry's guidelines.

**Rubber Resilient Flooring Materials require a disinfectant at or above a pH of 6 and at or below a pH of 10.5 when properly diluted.**

**Vinyl Resilient Flooring Materials require a quaternary disinfectant at or above a pH of 6 and at or below a pH of 10.5 when properly diluted.**

Allow the solution to dwell for the recommended period of time (based on bacteria or virus that you are targeting). Completely rinse and remove all disinfecting chemistry from the flooring material and allow the floor to completely dry. Left behind chemistry can soften materials and lead to damage, or create a film on the surface and cause scuffing.

When choosing a disinfectant to use on your flooring materials, be sure to use a high-quality, reputable branded product to ensure the performance and safety of the disinfectant. Be sure to always follow instructions and dilution ratios outlined by the chemical manufacturer. Straying from these instructions can result in severe damage to the flooring materials.

Below we are providing a list of disinfectants that we are recommending for use on our products (all are quaternary disinfectants and safe for vinyl products). Should you choose to perform disinfection with a chemical other than one of those listed below, ensure that testing is performed prior to use by using attic stock or material installed in a non-exposed area for possible damage that could be done to the flooring materials. Any damage done to the flooring material from the use of an unapproved disinfectant will not be covered by the product warranty.

- XL North's Vital Oxide
- Diversey's Virex II 256 Disinfectant
- Eco-Lab's Multi-Purpose Disinfectant Cleaner
- Spartan's HDQ Neutral
- Spartan's Super HDQ