

The five critical security elements of disinfecting should serve as the foundation for any training program focused on infection prevention protocol. One of these five critical security elements is dwell time. To better understand the importance of dwell time and how to achieve it, we have compiled some important frequently asked questions. If you have any specific questions, please contact an expert at Charlotte Products by emailing experts@charlotteproducts.com.

Where can I find the dwell time?

The label is the law. The label on your disinfectant product tells you everything you need to make sure you are disinfecting that surface, including your dwell time.

Do I really need to follow all those directions?

Yes you do. Any other way is a failure.

What is the purpose of dwell time?

Dwell time, also called contact time, is the amount of time the disinfectant needs to remain wet on a surface to properly disinfect. This is the time that it takes for the disinfectant product to achieve the kill claims on the label. Dwell times may differ for different types of microorganisms and can range from anywhere between a few seconds to up to 10 minutes. That is why you will want to know the pathogens you are targeting and respect the corresponding dwell time.

Does the surface have to remain wet the entire dwell time?

Yes, the surface must remain wet for the entire dwell time. Anything else is a failure.

If I cut the dwell time in half, will the disinfectant still work?

No. You cannot guarantee that your surface has been disinfected if you do not respect the full duration of dwell time. You have to set your clock and respect the dwell time.

What if my product has a longer dwell time? How can I keep a surface wet for up to ten minutes?

Dwell time can be as long as ten minutes with some products. We recommend applying more product on a surface to ensure it stays wet longer. Both humidity and air temperature play a factor. It can be a challenge to keep a surface wet for that amount of time if you do not follow a regular cleaning routine. We suggest following standard operating procedures (SOP). They help establish a cost effective quality assurance cleaning protocol in any type of facility. Ensure you pre-clean areas that require disinfecting, then apply your disinfectant to these surfaces. You may then go about cleaning other areas of the room, allowing the disinfectant to dwell. This addresses current labor costs while achieving disinfection.

Does temperature and humidity impact dwell time?

Yes, the weather and humidity in the air can impact the ability to achieve dwell times. Drier and hotter weather means your product will dry faster, so you will need to apply a little more to ensure you are following dwell times.

Does the speed of application impact dwell time?

This is common sense. If you go through a room very fast, you will often leave less product on the surface. If you take your time, you apply more, and the surface will stay wet longer.

Do you recommend a specific type of application to ensure dwell times?

We recommend the traditional pump-up sprayer for applying disinfectant to high-touch surfaces. Since the COVID-19 pandemic has brought on the prevalence of new application methods for disinfectants, including sprayers, foggers and misters, dwell time must be reinforced as a fundamental step in any infection prevention plan.

5 Critical Elements of Disinfectant Security

Disinfectant SECURITY ELEMENTS

01

Always use a registered product. Read and understand the label.

02

Dilute properly regardless of the dilution method. Verify PPM.

03

Always pre-clean surfaces.

04

Dwell Contact Time.

05

Potable water rinse on food contact surfaces and pre-school toys.