

As we deal with this Swine Flu outbreak, some of the dominant questions and concerns revolve around the impact of disinfectants on the indoor air quality, specifically, the health and safety of the facility's occupants.

These are valid concerns. There are scores of extremely powerful and potentially corrosive chemicals that would have a very negative effect on the indoor air quality. Consider bleach, while it is well accepted that bleach has enough corrosivity to kill almost all pathogenic microorganisms, it also has the ability to damage surfaces and cause varying forms of respiratory distress in building occupants.

It is with this in mind that drives the point that the best disinfectant program will incorporate several disinfectant solutions. An operating room, for example, would benefit from an extremely aggressive disinfectant, whereas certain public areas and private offices could be disinfected with far less corrosive and dangerous disinfectants.

Practice Greenhealth (H2E) had this to say in a recent article...

"...best practices can assure that disinfection is highly effective without involving unnecessary exposure for workers, staff, and patients, and such practices should be encouraged as part of environmentally sound cleaning operations. These include careful classification of areas of the hospital as critical, semi-critical, and non-critical, using the appropriate product for target microorganisms, using products at the appropriate concentration and for the proper residence time (dwell time/let is sit wet time). Infection control must also incorporate many essential practices unrelated to cleaning, like increased hand-washing."

And...

"Health care facilities throughout the country have successfully implemented green cleaning programs while maintaining the efficacy of their infection control efforts. Practice Greenhealth encourages health care facilities to continue to adopt environmentally sound cleaning as an overall quality improvement program, carefully considering each aspect of implementation." <http://cms.h2e-online.org/ee/facilities/greencleaning/>

The point is that we should incorporate several different disinfectants in a highly efficient program. We can maximize effectiveness where it is critically needed (like a RTU) and use a cost effective cleaner/disinfectant solution (like ES 25, 1:64 or 1:256) or a disinfectant only (that needs to be pre-cleaned - such as ES 512 or ES 128) in other areas. By approaching it that way, we will accomplish exactly what we want, while minimizing overall costs.

Cheers,
Mark Warner