May 1, 2003

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Tahoma School District Custodial Staff Newsletter

As The Toilet Turns

The Microscopic World and Its' Impact On Cleaning - Part 2

This is the second in a series of articles

By: Paul McTiernan of Coastwide Laboratories

Second segment: You must break the chain of infection.

Microbes have there own unique way of getting around. Microbiologists call this "chain of infection." The chain of infection has six segments or links. The first link is the Pathogen. Remember in our last segment we talked about Pathogens. Pathogens are harmful microbes and we use our disinfectant cleaners to attack them.

Patients with existing illnesses are more likely to be at risk. Pathogens consist of bacteria, virus and fungi.

The second link is the "reservoir." Pathogens need an environment to grow in or on; the human body, soiled linen, mops, dirty gloves, et cetera. The reservoir must also provide special needs like food, light, air, and moisture.

The third link is the "exit portal." These would be areas where pathogens leave the environment they are in through such means as body wastes, sneezing, coughing and open wounds. Pathogens are also able to travel through careless housekeeping habits, i.e. dirty mop water, dirty or soiled shoes, et cetera. Changing mop water daily is a must because of this.

The fourth Link is the "mode of transmission." How does the microbe get to its next home? There are six ways we can view this link. Direct contact, (touching an infected person), indirect contact, (touching a contaminated object), droplet transmission, (coughs or sneezes), vehicle transmission, (by foods or IV's), airborne transmission, (by suspension in air) and vector transmission (by insect stings or rodent bites).

Our fifth link is "portal entry." This is how the pathogen enters its' new home. It could be through the mouth, nose, eyes, or breaks in the skin. *(continued next column)*

(continued from previous column)

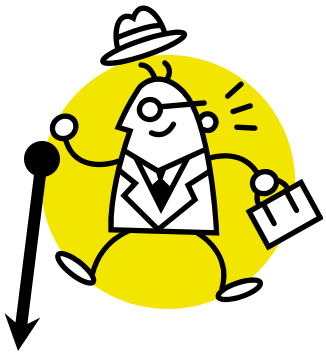
Our last link is "susceptible host." Humans become more susceptible when the body defenses break down and allow pathogens to enter and react. It is important to get enough sleep, keep up your defenses, maintain a healthy diet, and keep pathogens out of your body. This is done most effectively by washing your hands before eating, smoking, or touching area's of your face or eyes.

Anywhere along this chain of six links, we have the power to break their effects by cleaning, disinfecting and isolation.

(Watch for part three in the June, 2003 issue.)

Moving Around Inside and Pulling from the Outside

This month, once again, we have some changes in job positions. Larry Vance has now taken the four-hour position at Russell Ridge while at the same time Sonia Barton has moved from subbing here and there to a four-hour position at CRMS. Welcome aboard Sonia! We'll keep you informed as more changes occur during the months ahead.



PAID HOLIDAYS

Memorial Day—Monday May 26, 2003

Another Puzzle for Thy Mind!

Study this paragraph and all things in it. What is vitally wrong with it? Actually, nothing in it is wrong, but you must admit that it is most unusual. Don't just zip through it quickly, but study it scrupulously. With luck you should spot what is so particular about it and all words found in it. Can you say what it is? Tax your brains and try again. Don't miss a word or a symbol. It isn't all that difficult...?

For the answer, go to the site below and look for this reference: ZNVG
© Kevin Stone:
[www.brainblisters.com]

"What More Can I Learn?"

Page Two:

1. Are Feminine Hygiene Products Considered Regulated Waste?
2. How Would You Answer?
3. How Would You Answer?...Answers

Page Three:

Special Pull-Out Page on Vacuum Care!

Are Feminine Hygiene Products Considered Regulated Waste according to the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard?

Data Researched and Prepared by Roger McFadden
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OSHA does not generally consider discarded feminine hygiene products, used to absorb menstrual flow, to fall within the definition of regulated waste. The intended function of products such as sanitary napkins is to absorb and contain blood. The absorbent material of which they are composed would, under most circumstances, prevent the release of liquid or semi-liquid blood or the flaking off of dried blood.

OSHA expects these products to be discarded into waste containers that are properly lined with plastic or wax paper bags. Such bags should protect the employees from physical contact with the contents.

At the same time, it is the employer's responsibility to determine the existence of regulated waste. This determination is not based on actual volume of blood, but rather on the potential to release blood, (e.g., when compacted in the waste container). If OSHA determines, on a case-by-case basis, that sufficient evidence of regulated waste exists, either through observation, (e.g., a pool of liquid in the bottom of a container, dried blood flaking off during handling), or based on employee interviews, citations may be issued.

(Reference: http://www.coastwidelabs.com/techserv.htm)

How Would You Answer? True or False?

(For safety, do not perform any of the following until reading the correct accompanying answers.)

1. If you find a circuit breaker to be faulty, you can replace it with a circuit breaker that has a higher amperage rating than the original without encountering any problems.
2. To make a more effective cleaning solution, mix bleach and ammonia.
3. When high-speed buffing, always move the machine forward and backward, never from side-to-side.
4. Always wash walls from bottom to top.
5. Burned-out light-bulbs should be thrown into the garbage dumpster.
6. Feminine hygiene products are not usually considered regulated waste by OSHA.
7. Vacuum bags should be changed when the vacuum stops sucking.
8. Any length extension cord may be used with cleaning machines (vacuums, buffers, et cetera) to reach the desired destination.
9. When changing air filters, the filters may be installed in either direction.
10. Everyone gets a raise next month. (Answers are next door)

Answers to "How Would You Answer?"

1. False. That would allow more current to flow thereby increasing the risk of burning up the wiring before tripping the breaker.
2. False. This creates a poisonous vapor which could be fatal.
3. True.
4. True. Washing from top to bottom will cause the solution to run down the wall leaving permanent streaks.
5. False. Light-bulbs need to be disposed of in accordance with local laws for hazardous waste which is imposed on the District.
6. True. See article on page 2.
7. False. See article on page 3.
8. False. A longer cord will increase resistance and cause the machine to overheat. Use only the specified length per each machine.
9. False. Filters must be installed with the air flow going in the direction of the arrows on the filter.
10. For answer, see Bob Schuler.

Pull-Out Page on Vacuum Care!

PRO-TEAM Backpack Vacuum Operating Tips

Proper Vacuuming Motion for Large Areas

1. **Begin with the wand parallel to your body**

2. **Draw the top of the wand in toward your waist and twist at the waist walking backward or forward (a side-to-side motion)**

The motion is similar to mopping and keeps the upper body and arms from tiring.

Caring for your Vacuum

1. **Every time that you finish vacuuming, shake out the cloth and Micro filters.**

2. **Each week, rinse, air dry, and return the foam/filter diffuser to the bottom of the backpack vacuum below the motor.**

After each shift, wipe the inside and outside of the vacuum with a household cleaning agent.

Troubleshooting

1. **If the vacuum will not operate, check: The power supply cord into the wall outlet; the power supply cord at the vacuum; the switch is in the "ON" position.**

2. **If the pigtail power cord is getting warm, check to see that the extension cord does not exceed a length of 50 feet. Longer cords will overheat and damage the vacuum.**

If the exhaust that comes out of the bottom of the vacuum is warmer than usual, check and/or clean all four (4) filters.

Filter Maintenance

1. **Check the Micro filter EACH and EVERY time you start and finish vacuuming. A clogged and dirty filter restricts air flow and results in reducing suction and overheating.**

2. **While vacuuming throughout a building, stop every two (2) hours or as needed to shake out the Micro filter. Replace the Micro filter when necessary. (NOTE) Lift the Micro filter and cloth filters out at the same time to avoid ripping.**

3. **Once a month (or more often if needed) hand or machine wash the cloth filter and let it LINE DRY. Do not put in a dryer.**

4. **Once a week or more, remove the motor intake (dome) filter by reaching in through the top of the vacuum (under the cloth filter) and pulling the top piece of the dome filter off. Remove the foam, shake it out, rinse it, and let it air dry thoroughly before replacing.**

Each week rinse, air dry, and return the foam filter/diffuser at the bottom of the vacuum below the motor.