

Environmental Public Health Services & COVID-19 in Schools in First Nations in Alberta

Here is what can be expected from Environmental Public Health Services should a positive case of COVID-19 be identified in your school:

1. An Environmental Public Health Officer (EPHO) may contact your school to obtain information for local community health staff to initiate contact tracing. The information that may be requested from the school includes:
 - Attendance records for students and staff
 - School bus seating charts
 - Visitor information
2. An EPHO may also contact you to schedule an onsite assessment.
 - Please ensure staff who are knowledgeable on the school's COVID-19 policies, procedures and cleaning products are scheduled to be onsite during this assessment. This can include maintenance staff, principal, occupational health and safety representative and/or custodial staff.
3. The EPHO will conduct the onsite assessment and ask questions regarding your school's policies, procedures, and cleaning products.
4. The assessment may take between 1-3 hours depending on the size of your school, the number of students and other factors.

What can you do to prepare for the onsite assessment?

1. Ensure the appropriate staff are available to accompany the EPHO during the assessment.
2. Gather records, including:
 - school re-launch plans
 - cleaning logs
 - visitor logs
 - school bus seating charts
 - attendance records
3. Document which rooms, areas and classes were affected by the positive case.
4. Gather information about your school's cleaning and disinfectant products. See details below under **steps to follow for proper cleaning and disinfection**.
5. Treat the affected classroom(s), personal items and equipment.
 - Place items and equipment that cannot be cleaned and disinfected in a bag or container for 72 hours.
 - Thoroughly clean and disinfect all the room's surfaces and its contents.
 - Document the date and time when the affected rooms were cleaned and disinfected.

What to expect after the EPHO leaves your school:

1. The EPHO will send you a report of their observations and recommendations.
2. The EPHO may schedule a re-inspection with you to check the progress your school is making towards the recommendations.



Steps to Follow for Proper Cleaning and Disinfection:

1. Confirm that your disinfectant products are effective against COVID-19, and that they have a Drug Identification Number (DIN) and a virucidal claim. Alternatively, a 1000ppm bleach solution can be used.
 - a. A list of Health Canada approved disinfectants against COVID-19 is available here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>
 - b. More information on Recommended Disinfectant Use in Public Facilities during COVID-19 Pandemic can be found here: <https://www.onehealth.ca/Portals/1/Uploaded%20Docs/Recommended%20Disinfectant%20Use%20in%20Public%20Facilities%20during%20COVID-19%20Pandemic.pdf>
2. Review your school's cleaning and disinfection process for high-touch surfaces and the affected rooms and areas. Ensure the process confirms and documents the following:
 - a. Staff are following the directions on the product label, including correct dilution of chemical product(s). The use of test strips, if available for your product, to confirm concentrations.
 - b. Surfaces are physically cleaned before being disinfected. Regardless of the application method of disinfectant, a physical cleaning of the surface is required to ensure that the disinfectant will be effective. Two wipe method should be completed; first wipe to remove any physical debris and the second wipe is to disinfect the surface.
 - c. The method the disinfectant was applied to the surface (e.g. electrostatic, spray, wipe).
 - d. The contact time the disinfectant remained on the surface (i.e. the amount of time the surface must stay wet).

If you have questions, please contact your local Environmental Public Health Officer or send your questions to sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca