

**Sanitizers**  
**November 13, 2025**  
**Questions & Answers**

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Below you will find the summary of the questions and answers (Q & A) from the live Webinar Series. For clarity and brevity, the live session of Q & A was trimmed from the original recording. Please keep in mind that this document is meant as a job aide. It does not create or confer any right for or on any person and does not operate to bind federal, state, or local food safety regulatory agencies. If you have questions concerning interpretation or application of various portions, please reach out to your Regional Specialist for assistance. Current Regional Specialist and District Supervisor maps are linked on the main BEHS INFO HUB page.

**All sanitizer products shall be verified for concentrations, testing ability, and EPA status prior to approval. Specific product questions should be directed to your regional BEHS contact.**

**Q: Could you touch on how if your community has hard water that it can neutralize the sanitizer.**

A: Uncertain on the answer. Sodium chloride solutions need to be used that day or if in a spray bottle that week. I do suspect that hard water would have an impact on how long the solution would be effective. I don't think it would have much of an impact on the immediate use or effectiveness. The minerals, like calcium, mess with the chemical reaction diminishing the sanitizer's killing power. So, to expand on the question, discussing to provide education to childcare facilities in particular who make up a bottle and tend to use the same sanitizer until the bottle is empty. That would be a case of educating as you go. Education is a critical component for any inspections.

**Q: With all the new products out these days, is there an EPA master list of approved sanitizers that meet the 5-log reduction requirement? I have several establishments that use hydrogen peroxide or other sanitizers.**

A: The EPA has a few lists, and it depends on what pathogens you're trying to get to. I can investigate it more to see if there is a specific list you're looking for. Make sure those products are easily testable.

**Is there a test strip for us to be able to verify the concentration that the product is being mixed to, and it meets the 5-log reduction? Products should have EPA**

registered on their label. They make test strips for the products, however a lot of establishments don't know proper concentrations

**Q: I assume the proper concentration would be written on the bottle for the hydrogen peroxide?**

A: It's not usually. Sink and sanitizer test strips are the only ones I have seen with the proper ranges displayed on the bottle

**Q: We have seen more establishments using lactic acid/DDBSA. When generated onsite the concentrations are ok but there is a ready to use (RTU) bottle they buy from Ecolab that is way too high according to the test strips. I have reached out to Ecolab and have yet to receive an answer. It is called Sink and Surface cleaner sanitizer and in a maroon and white bottle in case anyone sees it**

A: I've not personally run into the lactic acid sanitizers. I know Clorox has a premade bleach type sanitizer that specifies its concentration on the bottle. I still always double check the sanitizer with a testing strip to make sure it's the concentration it states it is.

**Q: Any time I see pre-made solutions they are always too strong. Would you suggest they only use solutions they make? Or make them dilute what they already have?**

A: I'm for mixing it themselves. If they already have it - I wouldn't want them to discard it if it can be diluted. I know a lot of facilities get their products and measuring methods. Where they usually have it down to science when mixing large quantities. I see that a lot in childcare facilities. If the pre-made product is too strong, you can test it with a testing strip.

**Q: Did you discuss food contact surface sanitizing wipes and their proper use?**

A: I didn't discuss the wipes specifically. Again, I would make sure they meet that log reduction. How easily testable are they? Are they drying out? I would need to look further into it.

**Q: I have been seeing these more at TFEs over the last year. These are Quat sanitizers. Do you recommend a certain way to test the concentration for each wipe?**

A: As long as the cloths are saturated enough it'll change on the test strip. It's important to be sure they're maintained, don't dry out, meet our standards for the log reduction and are food surface safe.

A: For a lot of the newer products reach out to the manufacturer. See what they claim and if they're registered for the EPA. Are staff members aware of how to properly use it? A lot of new products on the market. Recently I got asked about an ozone-based product and had to do some extensive research to figure out its claims, like the scientific research behind it.

Ecolab does have representative at conferences, so if you want to have an in-depth conversation with a scientist about their products or their rationale. Like at NEHA 2026 conference in the Kansas City area. Ecolab posts SDS for their products on their website.

**Q: If they aren't properly trained/can't verify the process, then it's a chapter 2 (Food Code) demonstration of knowledge finding of the food code, isn't it?**

A: If they're not properly trained in verifying the process then that would be a violation of a demonstration of knowledge. A common phrase used is, "Educate as you regulate." If you can explain why we're enforcing or regulating something.