

Cleaning and Disinfecting of Vehicle Amid Coronavirus (COVID-19) Outbreak

The purpose of this information is to provide guidance for the care and cleaning of vehicles that may have been in contact with the COVID-19 virus. It is not intended to change any existing directives, policies, or procedures. This is informational only.

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other health authorities have emphasized that both washing one's hands and cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces regularly are key in preventing Covid-19's spread. Coronaviruses are well known to be particularly resilient in terms of where they can survive, and researchers are now beginning to understand more about how this affects the spread of the new coronavirus.

If a vehicle was occupied by a person who tested positive for COVID-19, we recommend following CDC guidance for cleaning the vehicles; however, if the positive COVID19 case was in the vehicle more than the 4 days previous, the virus will have expired and cleaning would not be required. If immediate cleaning is required, follow the instructions below.

Cleaning Instructions

Vehicles that have been occupied by a confirmed COVID-19 person should be taken out of service immediately and cleaned and disinfected as soon as possible if they cannot remain out of service for 4 days. Clean and disinfect vehicles exposed to a suspected and/or confirmed person as follows:

Select personal protective equipment (PPE). Personnel cleaning and disinfecting vehicles should wear PPE. Reusable PPE items will require proper cleaning and disinfection after use. Instructions for putting on and removing PPE are available at <http://www.cdc.gov/HAI/prevent/ppe.html> or contact your occupational safety and health officer for assistance.

Surface Preparation. Before disinfecting a surface, cleaning should be performed to remove all bodily fluids, trash and dust build-up. In contrast to disinfection where specific chemicals are used, soap and water can be used for the cleaning process.

Select a cleanser and/or disinfectant that will not damage the vehicle. With a few notable exceptions, many of the same household cleaners (such as non-bleach, unscented

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Clorox wipes) that kill coronaviruses on hard surfaces at home can also clean a car without damaging its interior. Spray disinfectants, similar to household aerosol sprays (e.g., Lysol) can be used on fabric and other soft or porous surfaces in the vehicle. [EPA Approved Cleaners](#)

Alcohol solutions that contain at least 70 percent alcohol are effective against coronavirus, according to the CDC. For the most part, nearly every interior surface of a vehicle can be cleaned with isopropyl alcohol.

Vigorous washing with soap and water can also destroy a coronavirus. Coronaviruses are surrounded by a protective envelope that helps them to infect other cells, and destroying that envelope can effectively disarm them. Soap and water are also safe for most car interiors, especially fabrics and older leather that may have begun to crack. Whatever you do, don't use bleach or hydrogen peroxide on the inside of your car. While they can both kill coronaviruses on surfaces, they will likely damage your car's upholstery. And do not use ammonia-based cleaners on car touch screens, as they can damage their anti-glare and anti-fingerprint coatings.

Always follow manufacturers' directions and warnings. Remember never combine cleaning chemicals as they may lead to toxicity.

If you or someone else who has been in your vehicle shows symptoms of any illness, you should clean frequently touched surfaces, including the door handles, steering wheel, shift lever, any buttons or touch screens, wiper and turn signal stalks, passenger and driver door armrests, grab handles, and seat adjusters. All drivers should clean these surfaces (if used) regularly during use and prior to turning in to motor pool, servicing, or another driver operating the vehicle.

Once you're finished cleaning, don't forget to wash your hands before and after driving. It's a good habit to get into even outside of the spread of COVID-19.

References.

Learn more about places with ongoing spread at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html#geographic>

The current list of global locations with cases of COVID-19 is available on CDC's web page at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/locations-confirmed-cases.html>

The CDC has released a COVID-19 Factsheet that is available on CDC's web page at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf>

Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>.

How You Can Kill Coronavirus in Your Car Without Damaging Interior Surfaces <https://www.consumerreports.org/tires-car-care/how-to-kill-coronavirus-in-your-car-without-damaging-interior-surfaces/>

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If Components require any decontamination of large scale, please reach out to their Contacting Office for this service.