

Sanitizing in a Sink

All breakfast and snack programs in the ONFE-School Breakfast Program are subject to inspection by Ottawa Public Health. Consequently, it is important to understand and follow the appropriate cleaning and sanitizing methods to reduce the possibility of food-borne illness.

1) What is the difference between cleaning and sanitizing?

Cleaning removes visible material from surfaces, such as food, dirt and grease. Sanitizing reduces the number of germs from surfaces after cleaning, so that they cannot contaminate food at the next meal.

There are two different methods for cleaning and sanitizing in a sink. The appropriate method depends on the type of items to be cleaned.

Definitions:

- “Food preparation items” - utensils and equipment that do not come in direct contact with the person consuming the food (e.g. pots, pans, preparation knives, cutting boards, vegetable peelers, etc.).
- “Multi-service items” - all containers or eating utensils that are intended for repeated use; for example anything that would go on your kitchen table during breakfast time, such as cutlery, cups, plates, bowls, etc.

If your program only uses “food preparation items” (mostly grab ‘n’ go or in-class bin programs) then:

- Use the 2-Compartment Sink Method (see Ottawa Public Health document entitled “*Dishwashing - 2-Compartment Sink Method*”).

If your program uses “multi-service items” or a combination of both types of items (mostly traditional sit-down breakfast programs) then:

- Use the 3-Compartment Sink Method (see Ottawa Public Health document entitled “*Dishwashing - 3-Compartment Sink Method*”).

Our partners at Ottawa Public Health have provided information on the correct procedure for both methods. Please see the attached documents.

- ❖ **NOTE:** If you have a question about your program’s facilities (e.g. not enough sinks, proper dishwasher detergent to use, etc.) please contact your Community Development Coordinator. We will liaise with the Public Health Inspectors to assess your school’s individual needs.

2) What kind of sanitizer should I use?

Liquid chlorine bleach is an easy and economical sanitizer.

3) How much chlorine bleach do I use?

A concentration of at least 100 parts per million (ppm) must be reached to allow for proper sanitization. To achieve this strength use the following guidelines:

- 1.5 - 2 tablespoons of chlorine bleach for a 3 gallon (13 litre) sink full of water; or about one capful in a standard sink full of hot water.

4) **How do I know I've used the correct amount of chlorine bleach?**

The ONFE-School Breakfast Program has provided each school with "Precision Chlorine Test Strips". These quick and easy to use test strips will help ensure that you are using the appropriate amount of chlorine bleach each time. If you require more test strips please contact your Community Development Coordinator.

- Please read the document entitled "*How to Use Your Precision Chlorine Test Strips*" for detailed instructions. Post a copy near your sink for easy reference.

5) **How long should the items be in the sanitizing solution?**

Completely immerse the items for a minimum of 45 seconds.

6) **Some of my items are too large to fit in the sink - how do I sanitize them?**

If your items (e.g. bins, trays, large dishes, etc.) cannot be fully immersed in the sink then you should use the "wash in place" method. This solution can also be used on countertops and table tops.

- a) Wash and rinse the items, as usual.
- b) Use a chlorine bleach sanitizing solution that is double the strength of that used when sanitizing in the sink. Therefore, the chlorine bleach concentration should be 200 ppm.
- c) Mix 2 teaspoons of chlorine bleach to 3 cups of water. This should yield about 200 ppm.
- d) Test solution with a test strip and adjust mixture as necessary.
- e) Retest with a fresh test strip.
- f) Apply the chlorine bleach sanitizing solution with a spray bottle. Clearly label the bottle and store it on a lower shelf of a locked cabinet away from any food products.
- g) Let items air dry.
- h) Prepare a fresh mixture weekly to ensure potency.

7) **How do I safely store the chlorine sanitizer?**

Chlorine sanitizers are to be stored in a locked, lower cabinet, preferably under the sink. Never store it near food or beverages.