

Sanitizing With a Household-Type Dishwasher

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 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.

2) Do I still need to sanitize if I use a household-type dishwasher?

Yes! Most household-type dishwashers cannot sanitize dishes because their water heaters do not produce sufficiently hot water. Even household-type dishwashers with booster water heaters or “sanitizer” buttons cannot reach the necessary sanitizing temperature of 82⁰ C required by Ottawa Public Health.

3) What product should I use?

If your school has a household-type dishwasher you should be using a detergent with a sanitizing agent. There are currently no products available in stores that are suitable. Please contact your Community Development Coordinator for suitable product information and how to purchase it.

4) How much sanitizing dishwasher detergent do I use?

Approximately one level tablespoon should be sufficient. It is important that you test the water with precision chlorine test strips (see resource document “*How to Use Your Precision Chlorine Test Strips*”) to ensure you are not using too little, or too much detergent. To do this:

- Add detergent and let dishwasher run for about 5 minutes after the detergent has been dispensed by the machine.
- Stop the dishwasher and use a test strip to test the water in the bottom.
- If the concentration is 100 ppm then the amount of detergent used is appropriate.
- If the concentration is not 100 pm then adjust the amount of detergent the next day and retest
- Continue to adjust and retest until you know the proper amount of detergent to use.

5) I have items that cannot be put in the dishwasher. How do I sanitize them?

Please see the resource document entitled “*Sanitizing in a Sink*”.