

School Custodians: Clean for Health

Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) is a type of bacteria that is not easily treated with common antibiotics. MRSA can cause skin infections that may look like spider bites, infected turf burns, impetigo, boils or abscesses. It is spread by touching the infection/drainage or by touching surfaces that have come in contact with the infection/drainage. MRSA can stay alive on surfaces for weeks, even months.

Frequent hand washing is the best way to prevent MRSA. **Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces** that may have come in contact with the MRSA bacteria is necessary **to keep the environment healthy.**

Cleaning not only makes our schools look nice, it also helps make schools healthy and safe places. Removing “dirt” we can see by cleaning is the first step. Once the dirt we can see is removed, we disinfect, or remove germs, by wiping down surfaces with a school-recommended cleaning product. Germs (bacteria and viruses) are killed during routine cleaning and disinfecting activities. Allergens (mold, pollen, dust mites and other irritants) are removed during cleaning activities like vacuuming, sweeping and mopping. Our recommendations, listed below, may refer to policies that are already in place, as well as policies that should be developed or adopted.

General Guidance

1. Hard surfaces and equipment such as floors, light switches, door handles, hand-rails, tables, and desks should be cleaned routinely.
2. Athletic equipment and areas such as wrestling mats, wall padding, locker rooms, and shower facilities should also be cleaned routinely.
3. If during a sporting event there is a release of bodily fluids (blood, pus or drainage) cleaning and disinfecting should be completed before the activity is allowed to continue.

General Guidance-Athletic Areas

1. All hard surfaces that *may* come in contact with body fluids should be cleaned¹ and disinfected² daily with an EPA-approved disinfectant, including benches, weights, workout machines, etc.
2. All floors/wall padding in athletic settings should be washed daily (if room is used).



Guidelines for School Custodians dealing with MRSA

¹ Clean all visibly soiled areas, using friction.

² Disinfect or sanitize “clean” areas to remove bacteria. Always wear gloves when using disinfectants.



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3. Locker rooms, including any shower areas should be cleaned daily, if used.
4. If soap is furnished, it should be accessible from a wall dispenser.
5. Ensure that athletic areas, locker rooms and restrooms all have *separate* cleaning mops and buckets, and that all mops (washable micro-fiber heads or disposable mop cloths preferred) and buckets are cleaned regularly.

Wrestling Room and Mats

1. Wipe down padding along walls, benches and door pulls/knobs with a quaternary ammonium (quat) or bleach solution (household bleach diluted 1:100 with water) after practices/matches. Please refer to the manufacturer's directions for recommended contact times for the various disinfectants.
2. Clean floors when mats are stored and before mats are used again.
3. Use "dedicated" mops to clean athletic areas, and wash mop heads on a regular basis. May use Swiffer style mop with disposable mop cloths that are discarded after each use.
4. Clean and sanitize mats before and after practice and matches. When mats are rolled up, all sides of mats should be cleaned before they are rolled up.
5. Use "dedicated" mop heads to clean mat surfaces. Wash these mop heads on a regular basis; athletic department may be responsible for this.

Weight Room

1. Wipe down grips on weights and lifting belts at least daily.
2. Clean floors, benches, supports, pads, light switches and door pulls/knobs daily.

Locker Rooms/Shower Rooms

1. Soap dispensers should have disposable soap "unit" refills.

Sports Equipment

(May be responsibility of Athletic Department)



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1. Schedule regular cleanings for sports equipment: balls (football, basketballs, baseballs, softballs, volley balls), racket grips, bats, gloves, pads, etc.
2. Clean and sanitize sports equipment that comes in direct contact with the skin of players, such as wrestling headgear, football helmets and fencing equipment (including wires) after each use.

