Simmonds & Bristow Pty Ltd

The Regional and Remote Water Specialist

HERE FOR YOU 50+ YEARS SINCE 1965

Hygiene Practices during Training Activities

Adopting good hygiene practices during water industry training will protect the health of us all!

NATA WORLD RECOGNISED ACCREDITATION

bsi. ISO 9001 Quality Management FS 520982

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What are the hazards?

It is important during training that measures are put in place to prevent the spread of illness or disease from micro-organisms.

The main microbial hazards that may impact your health include:

- Viruses: e.g. *Rotavirus*, *Norovirus*, *Coronavirus*
- Bacteria: e.g. *Campylobacter*, *Staphylococcus*
- Protozoa: e.g. Cryptosporidium, *Giardia*.

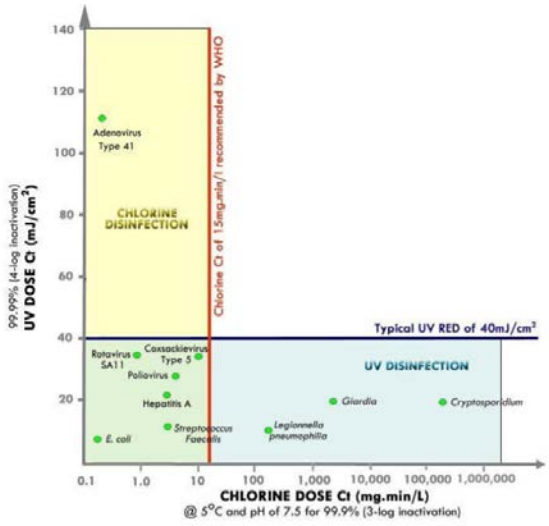
What are the preventative measures?

Washing hands often is the best way to control pathogens. Hand-washing should include:

- Washing hands with soap under running water for at least 20 seconds.
- Antibacterial soap is not necessarily better. Any germs on your hands are attached to the layer of acidic fats, oils and cellular debris on the surface of the skin, and soap dissolves this layer dislodging the microbes from your skin;
- Running water is best. Although hot water can kill microbes, the temperature needed (>80^{O}C) would cause burns. Warm water may help in producing a better soap lather;
- Rinse your hands with water once the soap and friction have lifted the dirt and germs from your skin.

Having clean (and disinfected if necessary) clothing, workspaces, equipment, and learner resources is also an important factor in controlling microbial infection, especially with many training sessions involving site visits to drinking water and wastewater networks and treatment plants.

Disinfection is an effective control against virus and bacterial pathogens (including *Coronavirus*), just so long as adequate Chlorine Contact Time (c.t.) is maintained (>15 mg.min/L). Chlorine disinfection at the levels present in drinking water supplies does not control protozoa. Make sure your water supply for drinking during training has adequate disinfection, and keep in mind contact time when you are disinfecting your items.



Coxsackievirus, Poliovirus and Rotavirus are examples of non-enveloped viruses. It can be seen that these are inactivated at chlorine Ct of less than 15mg.min/litre, therefore an enveloped virus such as the COVID-19 virus will be inactivated at even lower Ct values.

Hygiene Do's

- Always wash your hands with soap and clean running water for at least 20 seconds:
    - After you use the bathroom;
    - After you cough or sneeze;
    - After taking public transport;
    - Before eating or preparing food;
    - When dealing with somebody who is sick;
    - When carrying out work involving the wastewater system;
- If soap is unavailable, use hand sanitiser or gel that contains at least 60 % alcohol. Be aware that hand sanitiser will not work if the hands are already dirty, or for certain microbial contaminants if contact time is not adequate (leave for >20 seconds);
- Cough into your elbow or into a clean tissue, throw the tissue in the bin, and then wash the infected area;
- Seek medical attention if you are feeling sick;
- Let your trainer and/or coordinator know if you are unwell;
- Do not share pens, stationary or other equipment, unless they are first disinfected with alcohol wipes or disinfectant sprays (e.g. Glen 20);
- Ensure you are wearing the appropriate PPE, and are following appropriate WHS and organisational policies and procedures, especially during site visits;
- Perform a verbal roll-call instead of written sign-on;
- Avoid physical contact (such as shaking hands) with other personnel by maintaining an appropriate distance between yourself and other people (>1.5m);
- Disinfect desks, counters, common areas, doorknobs, learner resource material, etc. using hand sanitiser, disinfectant wipes, and/or Glen 20;
- Classroom doors will be left open to reduce the need to touch door handles wherever possible;
- Make sure your phone is disinfected with alcohol wipes throughout the day;
- If you come across somebody who has a viral infection, gargle some antibacterial and antiviral mouthwash.

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Hygiene Don’ts

- Don’t come to training when you are sick. This is both a Simmonds & Bristow policy, as well as a socially astute practice to reduce the likelihood of illnesses spreading;
- Don’t allow other people who are sick to infect you or your equipment;
- Don’t operate your computer or other equipment without first washing your hands;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth, unless you have previously washed your hands (and make sure you wash your hands after you touch these areas as well);
- Don’t consume food or drink within classrooms, and always wash your hands prior to eating and drinking;
- Do not share your phone with others, unless it is disinfected between uses;
- Don’t touch a water bubbler when you are drinking (preferably use a water bottle that is washed after each use;
- Face-masks are not necessary during training (avoid contact with the face unless hands are washed). However, face-masks should be worn if required for other WHS requirements (e.g. handling of hazardous chemicals, undertaking site tours in the vicinity of raw sewage, especially where airborne droplets are present).

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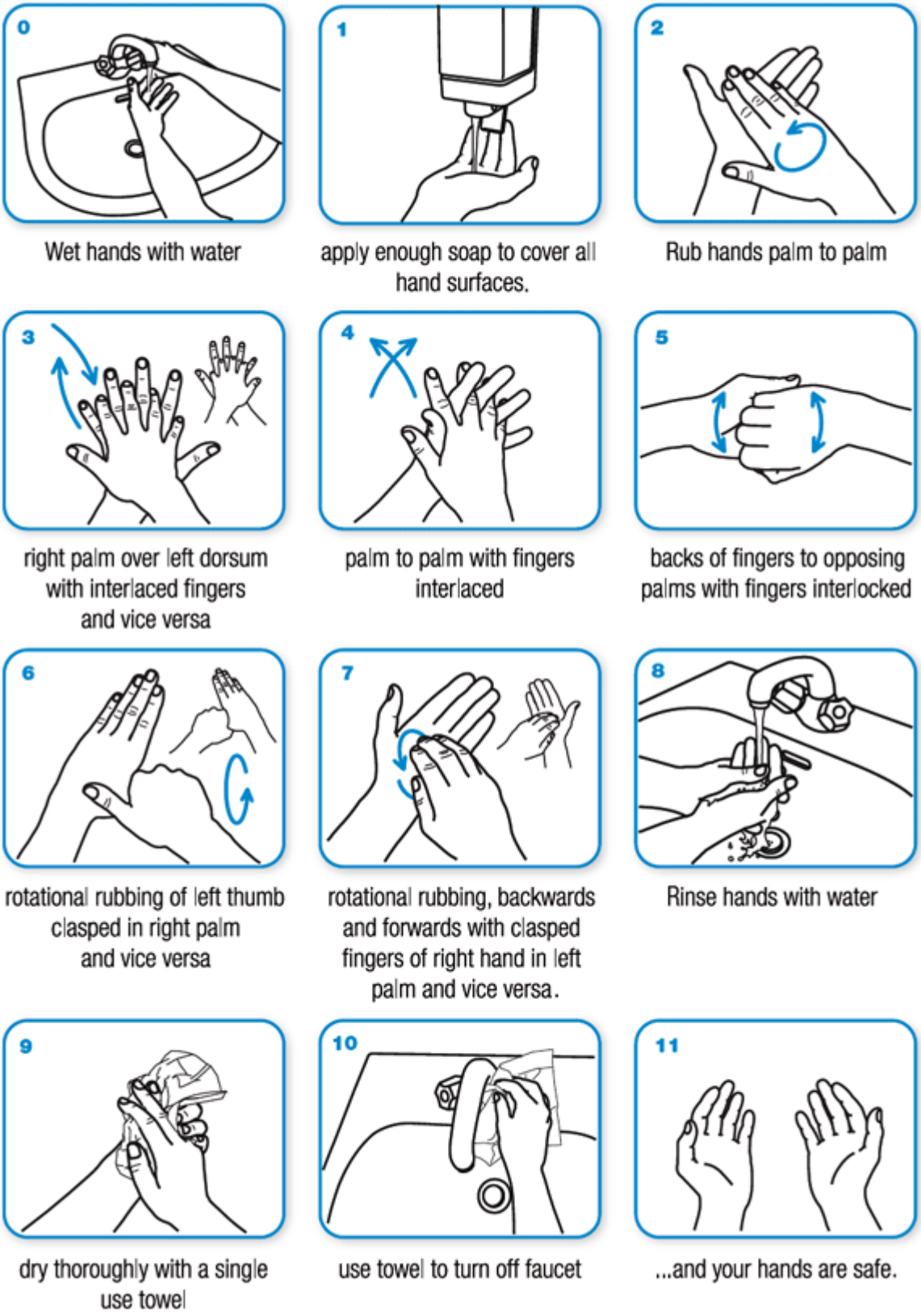
Correct hand-washing procedure



Source: World Health Organisation Website: https://www.who.int/gpsc/clean_hands_protection/en/