



DEPARTMENT OF
**ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH AND SAFETY**

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EHS BULLETIN

AUGUST 2024

HAND SANITIZER

Did you know that expired hand sanitizer is safe to use? Hand sanitizers are required by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to have an expiration date because they are regulated as over-the-counter drugs due to their high alcohol content. However, it is safe to use expired hand sanitizer, especially if the container has never been opened.

A product's expiration date notes when it has reached 90% of its original effectiveness. When it comes to hand sanitizer, check the alcohol content. In order to do its job, hand sanitizer must have a minimum of 60% isopropyl or ethanol alcohol. As long as the hand sanitizer has a strong odor of alcohol and dries quickly after applying, it is still viable for killing germs.

If you come across expired hand sanitizer, keep in mind the storage conditions to help determine if it's still useful. The alcohol content in hand sanitizer can be diminished over long periods of time. Storing containers in warm places, such as the inside of a vehicle or in storage areas that are not climate-controlled could lessen the sanitizer's effectiveness.

Remember that hand sanitizers are regulated by the FDA, and the high alcohol content is what makes them a hazardous material. **For this reason, do not pour ineffective hand sanitizer down the drain or put it into the garbage. If you find containers of hand sanitizer that you believe are no longer effective, please contact EHS. We can help determine if the product is still useful and help with disposal.**

TAKEAWAYS:

- Check the alcohol content as well as the expiration date for a minimum of 60% isopropyl or ethanol alcohol.
- Store hand sanitizer in cool, dry places, and keep containers unopened until they are ready for use.
- Hand sanitizers are regulated by the FDA due to their high alcohol content, which makes them a hazardous material. Please call EHS to determine if expired hand sanitizer is still viable. We'll take care of disposal if necessary.
- Clean hands are healthier hands. Washing your hands often with soap and water, as well as utilizing hand sanitizer when facilities aren't available, is an important public health measure to protect yourself and others.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, SEE THE LINKS BELOW:

- [OSU Hand Sanitizer Fact Sheet](#)

For more information, questions, or to be added to the reuse contact group, call EHS at (405) 744.7241 or email us at ehs@okstate.edu.

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

As technology continues to advance, we are all acquiring more and more electrical devices and appliances, increasing our need for batteries and electrical outlets to keep them charged. Attempts to charge and use many of these simultaneously can lead to improper usage of aftermarket accessories, increased risk of fire, and even equipment malfunctions. According to the U.S. Fire Administration and National Fire Protection Association, there are an estimated 33,470 commercial electrical fires each year in the United States, resulting in an average of 45 fatalities and costing around 1.36 billion in property damage each year.

TIPS TO REDUCE THE RISK OF ELECTRICAL FIRES AND MALFUNCTIONS:

- Plug large appliances like refrigerators and microwaves directly into wall outlets.
- Install additional outlets when more than one power strip is needed.
- Only use power strips and surge protectors that have over-current protection built in.
- Power strips and surge protectors must be plugged directly into the wall and must not be used in conjunction with extension cords or daisy-chained together.
- Extension cords are only for temporary use with portable equipment, and are not intended to be used for extended periods of time.
- All electrical items, including extension cords, must be certified by a nationally recognized independent testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories, Intertek, or Canadian Standards Association.
- Keep electrical appliances and cords safely away from bedding, curtains, clothing, loose papers, and other flammable material.
- Always use the proper charger for electronic devices. Ensure aftermarket chargers provide the proper charge, current, and voltage.
- Always charge electronics like cell phones on an open flat surface. Never charge a phone in bed or in a closed environment that could cause the phone to overheat and start a fire.
- Never nail an electrical cord to any surface, and never run cords across traffic paths, or under rugs or furniture.
- Discard or repair damaged electronics. Damaged electronics should not be used since they can cause an electrical shock or a fire.

For any questions or concerns in regards to what electronics are allowed in dormitories, please contact Housing and Residential Life at (405) 744-5592 or read their [handbook](#).

MONTHLY TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Respiratory Protection

1st Tuesday of every month at 8:30 a.m.
FM North Building, Room 101C
Registration: email ohsp@okstate.edu

Bloodborne Pathogen Training

2nd Tuesday of every month at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.
EHS Conference Room, 003 UHS
Registration: email chemicalsafety@okstate.edu

Safety w/Hands-On Extinguisher Training

2nd Friday of every month at 9 a.m.
EHS Conference Room, 003 UHS
Registration: email ohsp@okstate.edu

Monthly Employee Training

3rd Thursday of every month at 9:30 a.m.
EHS Conference Room, 003 UHS
Registration: email ohsp@okstate.edu

Laboratory Safety and Hazardous Waste Training

4th Tuesday of every month at 8:30 a.m.
EHS Conference Room, 003 UHS
Registration: email ohsp@okstate.edu

For other electrical safety questions, call EHS at (405) 744-7241 or send us an email at fls@okstate.edu.