



SANITIZER RECOMMENDATIONS DURING COVID-19 VIRUS CONCERNS

Breweries have a variety of sanitizers on hand, but the sanitizers used in beer production are not appropriate for bar and kitchen sanitation. Always review the safety data sheet (SDS) for any product being considered for use in front-of-house sanitizing.

Breweries use a variety of powerful, oxidizing sanitizers, including peracetic acid (PAA) and chlorine dioxide (ClO₂). These should not be used for front-of-house sanitation. They can attack metal surfaces, cause adverse skin reactions, and can induce respiratory distress. In addition, it is important to remember that chemical detergents used in the brewery do not perform any sanitation role.

Some brewery sanitation tasks, especially during sterile beer sampling, involve the use of concentrated isopropyl alcohol or hydrogen peroxide. Alcohol is highly flammable, and peroxides are aggressive. Both are not appropriate as front of house sanitizers.

Two families of acceptable viral disinfectants are quaternary alkyl ammonium compounds (“quats”), and halogen-based disinfectants (namely chlorine bleach and iodophors). The quats are the same compounds found in commercial wet-wipes and various surface disinfection sprays. Quats are effective bacterial and viral disinfectants, and have a strong detergent characteristic. This means they not only neutralize viral or bacterial potency, but also help wash the surfaces clean. Some quat products are combined with water, alcohol, or hydrogen peroxide, but the basic sanitizing aspects are due to the quats. Check the manufacturer's safety data sheet (SDS) for advice on proper dilution and use.

The second group of compounds are oxidizing halogens. These are generally chlorine-based (sodium or calcium hypochlorite) or iodine-based, commonly called iodophors (iodine in a silicone aqueous solution, sometimes with nitric acid added). These halogen sanitizers can stain clothing and surfaces and cause noticeable flavor changes. The CDC has posted [recommendations](#) for how to use bleach as a sanitizer.

An extra benefit of quats and halogen-type sanitizers is that they have a long-lasting activity on the surfaces they have been used on. In other words, where acid oxidizers like PAA have a short activity time on the surface, quats, bleach, and iodophors last longer on the surface, giving more time to affect disinfection.

Going forward through the COVID-19 crisis, the Brewers Association recommends the use of quats and halogen sanitizers in front-of-house activities. Frequent spraying and cleaning with expendable paper towels is recommended. Disposable gloves should be used.

Within the beer manufacturing and canning/bottling areas, existing SOPs should be followed, and traditional cleaning/sanitizing cycles should be used, employing PAA or other appropriate brewery sanitizers.

With any chemical use, read and follow the directions from the manufacturer and consult the safety data sheet for personal protective equipment recommendations and hazard communication to end users.

- Brewers Association Safety Subcommittee