

The following are definitions of terminology from the United States Environmental Protection Agency: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/what-are-antimicrobial-pesticides>

Sanitizer: a substance, or mixture of substances, that reduces the bacteria population in the inanimate environment by significant numbers, but does not destroy or eliminate all bacteria. 99.9% reduction (5 min) 99.9999% (10 min)

Used to reduce, but not necessarily eliminate, microorganisms from the inanimate environment to levels considered safe as determined by public health codes or regulations. Sanitizers include:

food contact products - These products are important because they are used on sites where consumable food products are placed and stored. Sanitizing rinses are used on surfaces such as:

- dishes and cooking utensils

- equipment and utensils found in:

 - dairies

 - food-processing plants

 - eating and drinking establishments

non-food contact products - Non-food contact surface sanitizers include:

- carpet sanitizers

- air sanitizers

- laundry additives

- in-tank toilet bowl sanitizers.

Disinfectant: A substance or mixture of substances, that destroys or irreversibly inactivates bacteria, fungi, and viruses, but not necessarily bacterial spores, in the inanimate environment. 99.9999% reduction (10 min)

Used on, nonliving surfaces and objects to destroy or irreversibly inactivate infectious fungi and bacteria but not necessarily their spores. Disinfectant products are divided into two major types:

hospital type disinfectants are critical to infection control and are used on:

- medical and dental instruments

- floors

- toilet seats, and other surfaces

general use disinfectants are the major source of products used in:

- households

- swimming pools

- water purifiers

Germicides: A germicide is a substance or mixtures of substances that kill a number of microorganisms (e.g., viruses, fungi and bacteria)

Sterilant: Used to eliminate or destroy:

- fungi,

- fungus spores,

- viruses,

- vegetative bacteria,

- bacterial spores.

Sterilization is critical to infection control and is widely used in hospitals on medical and surgical, instruments and equipment. Types of sterilizers include:

- Sterilization by physical means (non-pesticidal).

 - steam under pressure (autoclaving); or

 - dry heat ovens (used primarily for sterilization of medical instruments).

It should be noted that although the numbers for reduction in microbial loading look very similar for disinfectants versus sanitizers, disinfectants provide fungal and viral control while sanitizers do not.

Various reputable web based resources for information regarding cleaning processes:

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fspecific-groups%2Fguidance-business-response.html

<https://www.iicrc.org/page/SBSRIICRCS410>

<https://www.issa.com/education/cleaning-for-infection-prevention/coronavirus-prevention-and-control-for-the-cleaning-industry>

<https://www.issa.com/certification-standards/cleaning-management-institute/custodial-training>

<https://www.issa.com/certification-standards/issa-clean-standards/clean-standard-institutional-and-commercial/download-the-standard>