

KEEPING INTERIORS CLEAN & SAFE

10 Things to Know About Antimicrobials

NO EVIDENCE OF BENEFIT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Antimicrobials lack proof to back up claims that they protect your health. Despite the growing popularity of antimicrobial products, there is currently no evidence demonstrating they keep people healthier. 2. Antimicrobials are not necessary, according to the CDC.¹ While tempting to use antimicrobial products in hospitals and other healthcare settings as a way to ensure cleanliness, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) say it's not worth it, and that hospitals are better off using proper cleaning practices and maintaining their HVAC systems. 3. They're no more effective at combatting illness-causing germs than plain soap, according to the FDA. After studying the issue for nearly 40 years, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) determined that antimicrobials in hand soaps are not only ineffective, but can also cause harm. The result is a national ban on antimicrobial additives in consumer hand soaps, effective in 2017.
IMPACT ON HUMANS & ENVIRONMENT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Antimicrobials might increase the risk of super-bugs. The widespread use of antimicrobials may contribute to the formation and spread of illness-causing germs that no longer respond to medical treatment.^{2,3} Cleanability of materials and appropriate cleaning are key components of Infection Prevention Control. 5. They may harm the environment, according to the USGS. Antimicrobials are, by definition, pesticides. Therefore, they might pose inherent hazards to human health and the environment. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) cited the antimicrobial triclosan as one of the most frequently found water contaminants.
CUSTOMER DEMAND	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Antimicrobials are not desired by some customers. American healthcare provider Kaiser Permanente in 2015 banned antimicrobial agents for use in its hospitals and other buildings and implemented purchasing standards into its product-sourcing processes that include criteria for safe chemicals, including total elimination of antibacterial agents at its facilities.⁴ 7. Architects have placed "Products Marketed as Antimicrobial" on a Precautionary List, and advise clients to choose alternative products where appropriate.⁵
REGULATIONS & NGO PRESSURE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. NGOs like Healthy Building Network and Green Science Policy Institute now influence end users to ban procurement on products with antimicrobial treatments. 9. Antimicrobials aren't always advertised clearly or accurately. The use of antimicrobial additives in building products is governed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), guided by a complicated regulation known as the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). The complexities of this law make it possible for manufacturers to stretch the truth of their marketing claims about the benefits of antimicrobial products, potentially misleading consumers. 10. In 2013, Tarkett moved away from using antimicrobials due to customer demand, NGO pressure, inefficacy of using them, and Tarkett's own environmental position of using "Good Materials" that do not have a negative impact on humans or the environment. Tarkett joined the Clean Hospitals network in 2020 with the aim of contributing to improving Hospital environmental hygiene and promoting innovative, effective and sustainable cleaning protocols through evidence-based approaches.

For more information contact **Tarkett North America** at 1 800.899.8916. tarkettna.com

¹cdc- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>
healthy building network

²Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR): «Assessment of the Antibiotic Resistance Effects of Biocides (2009)» https://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/opinions_layman/en/biocides-antibiotic-resistance/biocides-antibiotic-resistance-greenfacts.pdf

³No time to wait: securing the future from drug-resistant infections https://www.who.int/antimicrobial-resistance/interagency-coordination-group/IACG_final_report_EN.pdf?ua=1

⁴<https://about.kaiserpermanente.org/total-health/health-topics/kaiser-permanente-rejects-antimicrobials-for-infection-control>

⁵<https://healthy-materials-lab.s3.amazonaws.com/resources/Antimi>