

Introducing... Continental's new ColorGuard™ HACCP Cleaning Program

Introduction

Today many healthcare facilities, foodservice operations, schools and other institutions are focused on preventing **cross contamination**. What is cross contamination? Many definitions can be found. For example, when in the context of **healthcare**, it is defined as:

"The passing of bacteria, microorganisms, or other harmful substances indirectly from one patient to another through improper or unsterile equipment, procedures, or products."

McGraw-Hill Concise Dictionary of Medicine. © 2002

In the context of foodservice and schools, it is defined as:

"What happens when bacteria from one food item are transferred to another food item, often by way of unsanitary hands, kitchen equipment or cleaning tools..."

Daniel Alfaro, About.com Guide, part of the *New York Times Company*

Cross contamination happens when viruses or harmful bacteria are transferred from one surface to another. Why is it so important? Preventing cross-contamination is a concern for all types of facilities. Certainly, healthcare facilities are keenly concerned because they are the first place we turn to when something compromises our health. The need for cleanliness is inherent in protecting patients, staff and visitors. Products that help control cross contamination are important for other facilities too, such as schools, foodservice operations and office buildings. The spread of viruses and bacteria from room to room or person to person can start as a minor problem that quickly escalates into a full blown outbreak.

The foodservice industry uses a system called **Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP)** to manage the threat of cross contamination. HACCP programs are designed to identify specific hazards and measures for their control to ensure the safety of food. The system is comprised of 7 principles focused on prevention, including protocols for all phases of food preparation. One essential component of an overall HACCP program is a **color coded system that designates a specific color to various areas of the facility**. The main purpose of the color coding is to limit the use of cleaning products and tools to a designated area. For example, cleaning cloths used in the restroom should be used only in the restroom. Mops and mop buckets used to clean the floor of a meat cutting area should never be used in the customer aisles of a grocery store.

The **ColorGuard™ HACCP Cleaning Program** is designed to address the growing demand for products that help reduce the risk of cross contamination and support HACCP initiatives. *It includes a suite of products that are available in four different colors and offers an easy-to-use Usage Guide to be posted onsite where cleaning tools are kept.*

Recommended Color Designation Areas



Blue – Dining Areas, Offices, Lobbies, Patient Rooms, Hallways & Classrooms



Green – Kitchen, Cafeteria Food Prep Areas



Red – Restrooms, Infectious Areas



Yellow – Gymnasium, Storage/Warehouse, Non-Infectious Labs, Specialty Areas

Both CMC and Wilen feature a selection of products that are classified as ColorGuard™. They include mop buckets, mops, mop handles, receptacles, microfiber cloths, buckets and a cleaning pack specifically for restrooms. See our website for a complete list of our ColorGuard™ items.

Also featured is a **ColorGuard™ HACCP Usage Guide** available at no cost. This 8½" x 14" laminated chart allows your cleaning staff to keep track of which colors are designated for specific areas throughout any type of facility. The chart provides recommended color coding commonly used, but can also be customized for a specific need or specialty area. These can be ordered through Customer Service, item number 10250302 or you can download an electronic copy on our website.

More About HACCP

There is a lot of online information available. To learn more about HACCP, we recommend these sites for a good overall understanding:

- FDA Site - <http://www.fda.gov/food/foodsafety/hazardanalysiscriticalcontrolpointshaccp/default.htm>
- University of Arizona - <http://ag.arizona.edu/maricopa/fcs/haccp/fdsafety.htm>

Additionally, the Food Safety Institute of America offers a training course. To learn more go to: <http://www.foodsafetyinstituteofamerica.com/haccp-training.asp?gclid=CKHw-s-I3bECFURRkwodxGoARw>