

Fighting the Flu: A Janitor's Impact in Colleges & Schools

[Slide 1]

Hello everyone, and welcome to EnvirOx's webinar on Fighting The Flu. If you have any technical issues, be sure to send us a message and we'll try to assist. Don't worry if you run into issues, though, because a replay of the webinar will be available to you shortly after we've finished.

Here in Illinois, it's finally starting to feel like fall. This is the time of year when all of us are bracing to see how bad the flu season will be. It's tough to predict, so that's why we've designed this webinar to help you prepare. To start off with, let me ask you a question. A poll will pop up in the chat window. Just click the answer that best matches your response.

Do you change your cleaning program at all during flu season? Or are you prepared to if you're impacted by the flu?

- A) Yes, we make changes before flu season hits
- B) Yes, we are ready to change things if the flu season is bad
- C) No, we have no current program changes planned

[Slide 2]

Okay, while we wait for your answers to come in, I want to talk a little bit about the impact the flu has on colleges and schools. You're probably well aware of how you've been impacted in the past in your own facility. But let's take a look at some of the facts on a national level.

We'll use the 2017-2018 flu season as an example, because we have the most complete data on it. During this season, the CDC ¹ estimated that:

- 48.8 million were sick with influenza.
- 33.7 million went to a health care provider.

[Slide 3]

- 959,000 were hospitalized.
- 79,400 deaths resulted from influenza.

To put that into historical perspective, this season had the highest rate of sickness since the 2009 H1N1 pandemic, where an estimated 60 million people were sick with the virus. This season was also unusual in that many different age groups were hospitalized. It struck the very young and very old hardest, as usual, but also hit other age groups hard. More than 48,000 hospitalizations were children under 18.

Let's look at our poll results.

It looks like most of you said: Yes, we are ready to change things if the flu season is bad. That's great that most of you already have some plan in place to tackle the flu. Let's see how it compares against our recommendations.

[Slide 4]

Let's take a moment to consider the negative impact a high rate of sickness can have on schools. Overall, Influenza reduces one's effectiveness, alertness, and impairs the ability to perform actions.³ This is bad news for teachers AND students. In addition, for the 2017-2018 Flu season:

- The Flu cost US companies an estimated \$21 billion.²
- Schools in 14 states closed down due to the Flu.⁴
- In Oregon, a school was closed for a week after 43% of its students were affected.⁴

[Slide 5]

You have to understand the enemy to defeat the enemy. So, let's get to know the Flu a little bit better.

[Slide 6 – Shows Flu Symptoms]

The flu is a respiratory illness caused by the Influenza virus. There are categories of flu, and every flu season some strains can be more prevalent than others.

The symptoms of the flu and a cold can be similar. It's important to be able to tell the difference, as the flu can develop into more serious illnesses such as pneumonia or bronchitis.⁵ You don't want to use a fever as an indicator of the flu either, because not every flu will cause a fever. One of the best ways to tell a flu from a cold is that flu symptoms usually come on much quicker and more severely than a cold.

[Slide 7]

One of the most important things to know as someone who is cleaning to prevent the flu is how the flu is spread. This can happen through:

- Skin to skin contact
- Exposure to a contaminated surface
- Through saliva
- Airborne droplets like those we release when we sneeze or cough.⁵

This means that your cleaning should focus on high touch points, or the areas where people are most likely to contaminate a surface such as doorknobs, faucet handles, light switches, and toilets.

[Slide 8]

Okay, now that we know a little more about the Flu and its impact, let's look at how you can fight it. On airplanes you're always instructed to put your oxygen mask on first before helping others. This isn't selfish, it ensures you can do a better job assisting others. The same holds true for cleaning staff. You and your team are the first line of defense against the Flu. If you get sick, then one of the biggest and best weapons against the Flu is weakened or out of commission.

Cleaning professionals come into contact with high-traffic areas while cleaning, and the flu virus can live for up to 24 to 48 hours on hard surfaces.⁶ This means staff should take proper preventative measures. Here are some steps the CDC recommends:⁷

[Slide 9]

- Yearly flu vaccination. Talk with your health care provider about vaccination as prevention.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough and sneeze, and immediately dispose of the tissue.

[Slide 10]

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth as this helps spread germs.

[Slide 11]

- Encourage cleaning staff to stay home if they are sick.
- But, if that's not possible, consider that custodial staff often have their hands full as they work. So, blowing their nose into a tissue or inner elbow might not be possible. If you have a cleaning worker who is sick, consider having them wear a disposable mask.

We've created a poster with this information that you can hang up or pass out to your staff as a helpful reminder of these points.

[Slide 12]

Now we'll cover our recommended cleaning methods to protect against the Flu. You are critical to fighting the virus. Cleaning helps contain the spread of disease and infections. Students who are healthy *study* better. Teachers who are healthy *teach* better.

First, I want to ask a question:

Do you currently clean with EnvirOx products?

- A) Yes
- B) No

[Slide 13]

As we wait for the poll results to come in, let's take a moment to talk about the difference between a cleaner, a sanitizer, and a virucide. The marketing around different cleaning products can be confusing. It can make it seem like these are interchangeable. One of the most common questions we get from new customers is about the difference between the three categories. That's why we've made this handy chart for you.

This chart is part of an info sheet, which we'll offer up to you now. Keep this as a reference and to share with your staff.

One of the things you want to watch out for are claims that a product can clean and sanitize in one step. Be sure to read labels carefully and follow the EPA-regulated instructions. Some products are advertised as a one-step disinfectant, but the instructions reference "pre-cleaned surfaces."

[Slide 14]

It might seem like it's saving time, but ultimately you aren't doing an effective job cleaning. Why is that? If you don't clean first to remove the dirt and debris, the sanitizer or disinfectant can't penetrate them to do their job.

Okay, let's look at our poll results:

It looks like most of you are not currently using our products. If you choose not to, just know that the next section talks about how to properly clean to help prevent the spread of the flu. We use our products as an example of how to do this. Generally, these basic techniques should work if you use another product. We're biased, of course, and think they won't do as good of a job as ours. But if you do decide to use a different product, be sure to check all the included instructions and warnings.

[Slide 15]

The EPA recommends that every surface should be cleaned first.⁹ This may be all that is required for some surfaces and areas. It reduces germs, dirt, impurities, and irritants by removing them. It also removes the water and organic materials germs use to survive.

To clean, use a Light Duty dilution on all lightly soiled areas. Heavy Duty dilution can be used for heavily soiled areas to help break up, lift, and remove dirt and debris.

[Slide 16]

To sanitize, we recommend that you spray high-touch areas, indicated in red, with H2Orange2 Hyper-Concentrate 112. Then let the wet surface dwell for 5 minutes, and then allow it to air dry or wipe excess moisture away. This lets the product perform its sanitizing actions and virucide kill claims. Sanitizers actually kill most germs, rather than just removing them. Consider sanitizing the following:

- Frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs, switches, and handles.
- Toilets and urinals.

Virucides are useful when you're combatting specific viruses. For instance, H2Orange2 Hyper-Concentrate 112 is EPA registered to kill 99.9% of specified viruses. So, using this one multi-purpose product is sufficient for most school needs.

[Slide 17]

However, if you need a disinfectant, a separate product is required—Envirox's Non-Acid Disinfectant.

After cleaning with one of our multi-purpose products, you can use the Non-Acid Disinfectant by spraying it on a hard surface and letting it dwell wet for 10 minutes. Then allow it to air dry or wipe excess moisture away.

This is useful when a broad-spectrum disinfectant is needed: if you're cleaning a space that requires you to kill some combination of bacteria, mildew, fungi, and viruses. Again, be cautious of any product that claims it can clean and disinfect in one go. If dirt and debris are not cleaned away first, then the disinfectant can't get to the surface to do its job.

[Slide 18]

Finally, you can help fight the flu by spreading the word on how to prevent it! We've created two posters that you can share with your custodial staff or, if appropriate, hang around your school. We're offering those up for you to download now. One of them is a reminder of the best practices to avoid spreading the Flu.

[Slide 19]

The other poster can be used in conjunction with distributing a red (Heavy Duty) bottle of H2Orange2 Hyper-Concentrate 112 to individual classrooms to encourage instructors to use it as needed. You can order the extra red spray bottles through your local Envirox distributor.

[Slide 20]

We hope you've found this webinar helpful. We have a companion E-book you can download right now.

And, again, you can always download it and any of the other resources associated with this webinar at: www.enviroxclean.com/fighttheflu.

For questions, you can always email our client relations team at enviroxinfo@enviroxclean.com

Thank you for joining us and have a wonderful rest of your day.

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