

COVID-19 Recommendations for Sanitizing Technical Equipment

Introduction

Measures have been developed to protect against the exposure to the novel coronavirus, COVID-19. Using appropriate combinations of engineering and administrative controls, safe practices, and personal protective equipment (PPE) can help prevent exposures.

This guideline is intended to provide best practices on how to clean and sanitize the technical equipment used for production. The information below has been developed using current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines that can be found at the following website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

General Information

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and productions being suspended/paused, many productions have developed ways to shoot from home or from other remote locations.

While under stay at home orders and social distancing guidelines, equipment must be shipped to homes and/or self-isolation locations. Sending an employee to drop off equipment is discouraged. All available shipping companies (Fed-Ex, UPS & USPS) can be used to transport equipment.

Upon receipt of any equipment from a manufacturer or supplier, it is recommended that the equipment be cleaned and disinfected for added protection. After equipment has been used remotely, it will need to be cleaned and disinfected before it can be shipped back. As added precaution, all equipment should be cleaned when it is received for inventory or before shipping out again for re-use by another recipient.

The production, with assistance from Environmental, Health and Safety (EHS), should send cleaning and disinfecting supplies along with equipment, when possible.

Guidelines for Disinfecting Equipment

In general, alcohol is best for cleaning audio and other technical equipment. Bleach or Lysol solutions are not recommended for most equipment.

A 70% alcohol solution is recommended for cleaning and disinfection. *It is preferable to use 70% alcohol packaged wipes*, as they are lint-free and will avoid accidentally spraying or dripping solution into the equipment.

When using a liquid cleaning solution in a spray bottle, utilize a bottle with a fine mist that will

disperse the solution without soaking what you are spraying. If necessary, spray the solution onto a clean cloth or cleaning wipe and not directly onto the equipment, before wiping the equipment down.

Depending on the surface to be cleaned, it can be lightly sprayed, wiped, or dabbed with cotton swabs. Also, due to the size of large equipment, you may need to use multiple wipes or swabs.

1. **Wear disposable gloves during the entire process of cleaning and disinfecting equipment and surfaces.** Nitrile powder-free disposable gloves are recommended due to latex allergy concerns. Do not touch your face under any circumstance while wearing gloves. Do not reuse the gloves and dispose after use. Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds after taking the gloves off.
2. Use a facial covering while cleaning and disinfecting to avoid contaminating the items being handled. CDC guidelines for use:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>
3. Remove any batteries and disconnect power cords prior to cleaning.
4. When using lint-free cloths, disposable wipes or cotton swabs, do not reuse them.
5. Clean in an open area with good ventilation and avoid open flames. It is best to perform this task alone. If other people are present or assisting, ensure you are maintaining the six-foot social distancing protocols.
6. Once equipment is disinfected and is dry, place it in a sealable plastic bag to ensure that it remains disinfected until it is ready to be used. Ensure that the equipment is completely dry, then put into the bag and squeeze out all the air before closing. You should note the disinfection date on the package.
7. After disinfection is complete, wipe down all surfaces used for disinfecting and repacking items while continuing to wear gloves.

Mics with foam head “windscreens” or “head baskets” should not be re-used, if possible. Use a new screen for each use or disinfect using below recommendations.

Since audio equipment can be made up of many different types of material, it's always best to check with the original manufacturer to avoid causing any damage to the gear.

Microphones (Mic) – Handheld or on Stands

Never spray anything (including compressed air) on a mic. Instead, apply a small amount of Isopropyl alcohol onto a lint free cloth (avoid micro-fiber cloth) and apply a light, gentle, quick coat to the mic and allow to air dry.

Lavalier (lav) mics

Wipe down the cord and head with the cleaning solution and a clean cloth. If the lav has a foam head (head basket), remove it, lightly spray it with cleaning solution and let it dry. You can then clean the head with a cotton swab.

"Invisible" face-contacting mics

As these contact the skin and body and are in the breathing trajectory, wipe the surfaces with cleaning solution and a clean cloth.

Cords/antennas/power supplies

Wipe down with cleaning solution and a clean cloth.

Transmitters and receivers

Wipe down with cleaning solution, using a clean cloth. You may also carefully clean the terminals and switch areas with a cotton swab, lightly moistened with cleaning solution. Take care not to drip liquid into any of the openings.

Carry bags

As these are a fabric-like woven material, lightly spray with cleaning solution and allow to dry thoroughly. Do not shake bags, as this can cause any viral particles to disperse into the air.

Other Technical Equipment & Props

- Computers, webcams, memory cards, phones/touch screens, monitors, tablets, lights, stands etc. (including props) will also need to be disinfected after each use.
- Check with the manufacturer's recommendations for cleaning and disinfecting.
- If no guidance, **use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol**. Dry surface thoroughly.
- Batteries can be cleaned but avoid exposing the cleaning solution to the electrical contacts. This could cause damage. For information on shipping items with lithium batteries, contact EHS.

High Contact Surfaces, Cases, Belongings, and Equipment

- Clean and disinfect using a disinfectant that is registered by the EPA for use against COVID-

19. A list of registered disinfectants is available from the EPA here:

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

- You **MUST** read and follow all labels and precautions on any chemical and/or cleaning product being used.

Many products recommend:

- ✓ Keeping surface wet for a period of time (see product label).
- ✓ Using gloves and/or other protective equipment and ensuring proper ventilation during use of the product.

Household bleach solutions

- Diluted household bleach solutions may also be used if appropriate for the surface. Check to ensure the bleach product is not past its expiration date. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.

NOTE: To make a bleach solution, mix: 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water OR 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water.

- Follow product manufacturer's instructions for application, required protective equipment and proper ventilation.
- Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.
- Leave bleach solution on the surface being cleaned for at least 1 minute

Summary

Sending technical equipment out for use in remote production may pose a risk of transmitting the virus as it can live on surfaces for varying amounts of time. Cleaning and disinfecting items when they are received and after each use is the best method to prevent exposure.

Remember **wash your hands often** with soap and water for 20 seconds. Always wash immediately after removing gloves and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. Also, wash your hands after using the restroom, before eating or preparing food and after contact with animals or pets.

Hand sanitizer can also be used if soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty. As per the CDC, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol may be used. However, if hands are visibly dirty, always wash hands with soap and water.