



Inspector's Corner

Standard Part I, 2.2.3 Warning Signs

Standard 2.2.3 states *"Warning signs about the presence of contaminated textiles and the need to follow Universal (or Standard) Precautions must be posted in work areas where potentially contaminated textiles are stored or sorted prior to processing."*



Not only should signage be present within work areas where soiled textiles are being sorted, but it's just as important to post signage on the outside of doorways leading to these areas. This ensures visitors and employees alike are aware that they're entering an area where precautions should be taken not to inadvertently touch anything without wearing proper PPE. It also promotes compliance with additional policies put in place by the laundry related to those work areas such as practicing proper hand hygiene before leaving the soil sort area.

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Inspector's Corner

Standard Part I, 5.3: Hand Hygiene

Standard 5.3.1 states *"Provider personnel must practice hand hygiene after glove removal, after restroom use, before eating, and when hands become inadvertently contaminated with blood or other body substances. Standard 5.3.2 states "Employees responsible for packing, wrapping, storing or transporting clean textiles shall maintain proper hand hygiene at all times. [HICPAC Hand Hygiene guideline: 1 A-N]*



Healthcare professionals continue to emphasize proper hand hygiene practices to reduce healthcare acquired infections (HAIs) in healthcare settings. Proper hand hygiene within the healthcare laundry is just as important to help protect employees as well as prevent recontamination of clean textiles before they are delivered back to the customer.

Currently the FDA acknowledges that 4% of gloves marketed in the U.S. for healthcare use may have minute holes, which means employees could be exposed to pathogens that they can't easily see. Therefore, the best hand hygiene practice for employees on the soil sort line is to wash with soap and water before they leave the area and before going on breaks or lunch/dinner. Be sure appropriate handwashing facilities are available, paying close attention to easy access for soil sort employees to promote compliance. Waterless alcohol-based hand sanitizer should be located throughout the facility to provide an added level of hand hygiene effectiveness.

Every employee and all visitors should understand and adhere to all applicable hand hygiene policies. Have questions? Feel free to contact HLAC, or visit www.cdc.gov/handhygiene.

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Inspector's Corner

Standard 2.3.2, Part I: The Physical Environment

A clean environment is a key element of a good healthcare laundry. Cleaning of the walls, floors, vents, working surfaces, and equipment can help reduce the risk that textiles will become recontaminated once they've been processed.



Be sure your cleaning schedule is well documented and that employees know where to view it. Surfaces that become visibly soiled should be cleaned at the next opportunity in addition to regularly scheduled cleaning. Where EPA-registered products are required, be sure employees read and understand the labels to ensure proper disinfection.

EPA-registered products should be effective against a variety of pathogens, but minimally should include *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Salmonella choleraesuis*, HIV, HBV and HCV.

2010 Clarification:

In the soil sort area where bloodborne pathogens could be present, the laundry should use an EPA-registered product that is effective against *P. aeruginosa*, *S. aureus*, *Salmonella enterica* (formerly named *Salmonella choleraesuis*), HIV, HBV and HCV. The product used should be on one of three EPA lists of registered disinfectants: List B, D or E.

For general purpose or routine housekeeping in other areas of the plant, a general purpose cleaner is acceptable as is an EPA-registered product not on List B, D or E. Check with your chemical supplier to confirm your disinfectant's listing.

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Inspector's Corner:

Documents Requirement

When preparing for an HLAC inspection, having well organized documents can help the process go smoothly on inspection day. Here are some tips from our inspectors.

- Create a binder and insert samples of the documents for each requirement.
- Organize documents in the same order as the Standards.
- Use tabs to organize the book.
- Mark all the tabs with the corresponding Standard, for example, "Part I, 2.3.2."
- Have examples that are filled out, inspectors need to see actual documents, not blank templates.
- Seek assistance from vendors, trade associations, OSHA, and others for templates or examples
- Insure documents are up to date. Placing dates on documents and policies will show the inspector they have been reviewed and are current.
- Have quick access to additional back-up documents, for example specific files that contain an employee's training record.

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The Inspector's Corner

Standard 2.3.2.1 Environmental Surfaces

Standard 2.3.2.1 states that *"Environmental surfaces (i.e., floors, walls, ceilings, vents and equipment) shall be subjected to periodic blow-down processes to minimize the build-up of dust and lint."*

There are two things an HLAC inspector will look for to ensure the facility meets the standard. First, the inspector will visually observe the facility to see that it is free of any built-up amounts of dust or lint. This inspection will focus on equipment as well as the overall plant; be prepared to remove equipment back panels so the inspector can view inside. In addition, let equipment suppliers know you are preparing for an inspection so they can help with any needed equipment maintenance before inspection day.

Second, the inspector will review the facility cleaning schedules to ensure that the blow down and frequency is documented as part of the maintenance schedule followed by the facility.

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