

Hand Hygiene

What is hand hygiene?

Hand hygiene is cleaning your hands. Regular handwashing is one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid getting sick, and prevent the spread of germs to others.

How do you do it?

Hands can be cleaned using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Cleaning your hands only takes 20-30 seconds.

- **Using Hand Sanitizer – Hand sanitizer contains alcohol and is a flammable liquid. Flammable liquids should be stored away from ignition sources. Follow the instructions on the label.**



Figure 1 – Image from the World Health Organization (WHO)'s Hand Hygiene: Why, How and When? (WHO, 2009)

- **Using Soap and Water**

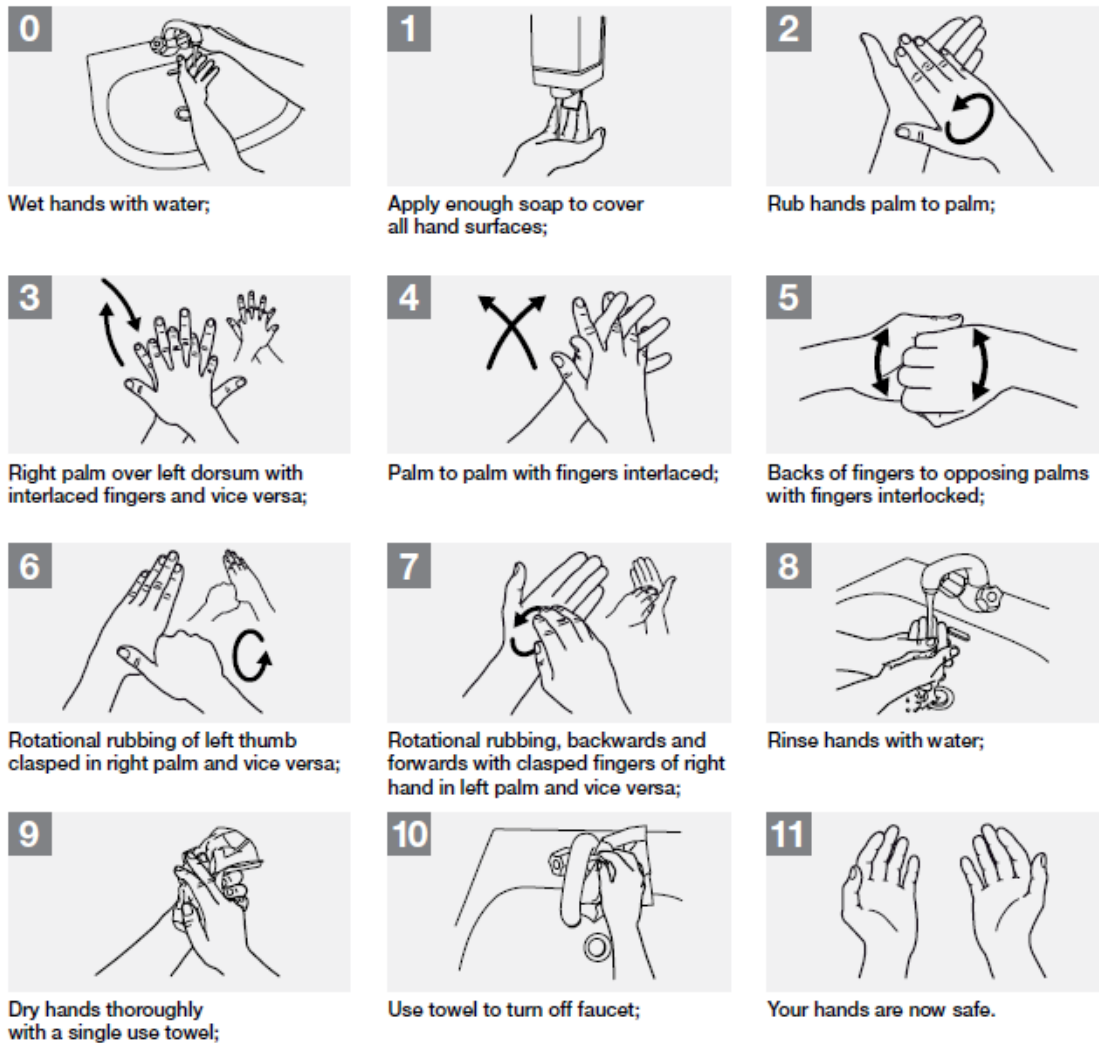


Figure 1 – Image from the World Health Organization (WHO)’s Hand Hygiene: Why, How and When? (WHO, 2009)

When should you clean your hands?

Clean your hands often to prevent the spread of bacteria and viruses that can cause disease, such as COVID-19. Wash hands before starting work and before eating, drinking, or using tobacco products. Then wash your hands after coughing/sneezing, using the bathroom, emptying garbage, touching animals, or anytime they could have gotten dirty.

What should we do when we don’t have running water at our work site or hand sanitizer?

A portable handwash station can be made using a table, container with a hands-free spout, and a five-gallon bucket. Wastewater caught in the five-gallon bucket should be poured down a drain. Be sure to keep soap and paper towels stocked at all handwashing facilities.

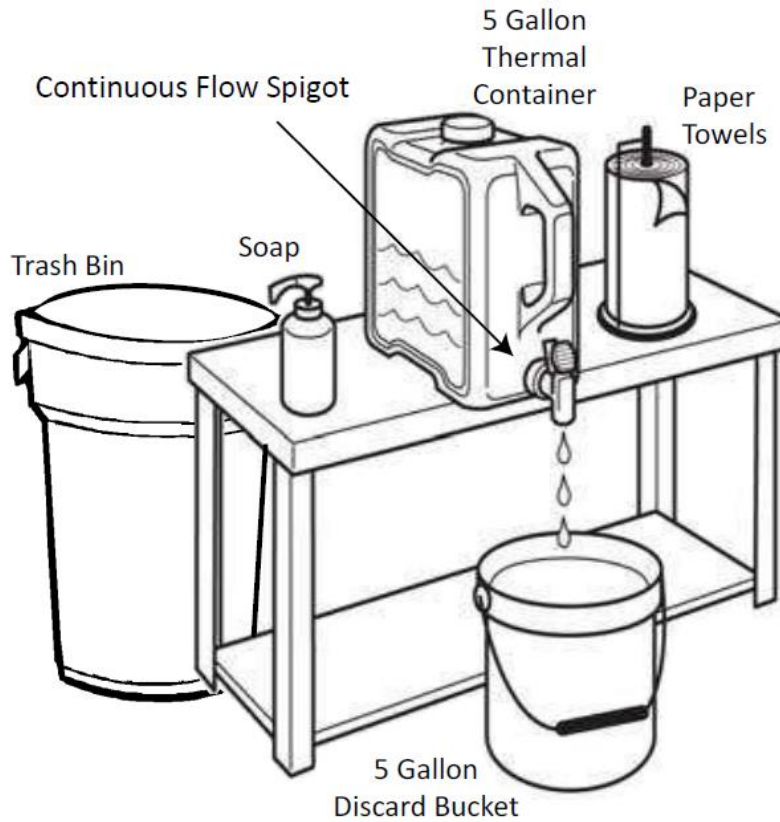


Figure 3 - Image from Alameda County Temporary Event Booth Pre-inspection/Self Inspection Form (Alameda DEH, 2014)

Resources

[World Health Organization \(WHO\) - Hand Hygiene: Why, How, & When](#)

[CDC – Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives](#)

[CDC – Fire Safety and Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitizer \(ABHS\)](#)