

# COVID-19 PROTOCOL – SANITIZING GAS DETECTORS

## Your health and safety is our priority.

In an effort to help staff contain the potential spread of COVID-19, the following protocol has been established. Industrial Scientific has provided cleaning and disinfection guidelines in the following technical specification: [Industrial Scientific - How to Clean a Gas Detector](#) (also set out on page 2 of this protocol).

**Regularly cleaning and disinfecting the surfaces of Metro Vancouver portable gas detectors lowers the risk of COVID-19 infection among staff using these devices.**

Portable gas detectors have sensitive electronic components that need special care during disinfection. The manufacturer recommends the use of soap and water to clean, and a bleach\* solution to disinfect.

### Using a diluted bleach\* solution to sanitize portable gas detectors:

- ✓ Wear disposable nitrile gloves when using the bleach solution.
- ✓ A 1:50 bleach\* dilution is recommended by the manufacturer (20 ml bleach to 980 ml water or 1,000ppm solution).
- ✓ Use very small amounts of bleach solution, only enough to moisten a cloth and use immediately to wipe down the device.
- ✓ Do not mix with any other products or chemicals.
- ✓ Use in a well-ventilated area, preferably outdoors.
- ✓ Allow bleach solution to dry on surface before using device.
- ✓ Bleach solution degrades over time, make a fresh batch every day to ensure effectiveness as a disinfectant.



\* Common 5% household bleach is suitable for this and can be picked up from Lake City Stores.

**Remember:** Everyday cleaners can act as sensor poisons or inhibitors and affect the functioning of your gas detector. Keep your device away from chemical products, even ones that seem harmless. For more information go to: <https://www.indsci.com/blog-search/where-sensor-poisons-lurk/>

## How to Clean a Gas Detector

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Gas detectors are lifesaving instruments that must be worn in your breathing zone to be effective. OSHA defines the breathing zone as “a hemisphere forward of the shoulders within a radius of approximately six to nine inches,” so a collar, lapel, or outside breast pocket is usually a good option. This location also keeps the instrument visible so you can see alerts if your hearing is impaired while working in a high-noise environment.

Unfortunately, wearing a [gas detector](#) within six to nine inches of your nose and mouth means that whatever dirt, grime, or bacteria your monitor has picked up is now in your breathing zone.

If you need to clean your monitor, your first instinct might be to grab a disinfecting wipe, like you would for any other surface. This is a bad idea for your gas detector.

### Why You Shouldn't Use Regular Disinfectants

The precision sensors in your monitor are [highly sensitive to many different chemicals](#), including alcohol and other disinfectants, so using them could prevent your monitor from alerting you to gas hazards. Additionally, alcohol-based cleaners will cause your monitor to go into alarm. If you zero the monitor too soon, the monitor will read falsely low, potentially putting you in unsafe conditions.

The rubber, plastics, and barriers in your monitor can also absorb the disinfectant chemicals. This is problematic because these are some of the same chemicals you may monitor. This effect does not last long, but the length of time you need to wait before zeroing varies, so the approach leaves plenty of room for error.

### How to Clean a Gas Detector— Without Damaging It

For typical dirt and grime, we recommend wiping down your gas detector with a soap and water solution (8 to 10 parts water to one part dish soap, like Dawn®). This cleans the monitor with less risk of damaging the sensors or putting you at risk of a malfunction. However, the soap and water approach cleans the monitor of everyday buildup—it does not necessarily kill bacteria or viruses that may exist on the surface.

To give your monitor a more serious cleaning, wipe down your monitor with a bleach and water solution recommended by the [Centers for Disease Control](#) (CDC). The CDC advises using 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) of bleach per gallon of water or 4 teaspoons of bleach per quart of water.

For more information on general practices for disinfection, please refer to the [CDC's Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations](#).

No matter which cleaning method you use, be sure to dock the monitor or bump test it after to be sure it's working properly.