



# COVID-19 (novel coronavirus disease) and Food Storage Warehouses in Washington State

## Food Safety

The situation around COVID-19 (novel coronavirus disease) in Washington State continues to develop. To be clear, food and dairy products **have not been identified** as a source of COVID-19 infection.

However, ensuring that your employees are following regulatory requirements, industry best practices for Current Good Manufacturing Practices, and warehouse sanitation will help mitigate the risk of employee-to-employee transmission in your warehouse facility.

The Food Safety Program is reviewing guidance to our inspection staff, encouraging everyone to take care of their health, and requiring them to avoid working if they are not feeling well.



## Current recommendations

**Here are some important reminders for you and your employees:**

- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Wash and sanitize food contact surfaces and equipment on a more frequent basis.
- Increase the frequency of monitoring hand sinks, including those in all restrooms, as hand-washing frequency will increase.
- Ensure all hand sinks are properly accessible, not blocked, and stocked with warm water, soap and paper towels.
- Completely disinfect the visitor and employee restrooms.
- Cover coughs and sneezes. Employees can sneeze into their shirt sleeve, but should NOT sneeze or cough into their hands. Wash hands immediately with soap and water after each cough or sneeze.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth to help slow the spread of germs. Current food safety rules require your employees to wash their hands whenever they touch their eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Monitor employee health.
- Conduct training that reinforces cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting procedures.
- For disinfecting, focus on high-touch objects. Door knobs, door handles and push plates, railings, light and air-control switches, faucets, toilet flush levers and the restrooms.
- Disinfect with an Environmental Protection Agency-registered disinfectant according to label directions for hard surfaces and contact surfaces, adhering to proper contact times.



## Stay informed

We encourage you to stay up to date on current information by monitoring the Washington State Department of Health's website at [doh.wa.gov/coronavirus](https://doh.wa.gov/coronavirus). There, you can find the most recent updates on the virus, recommendations and answers to commonly asked questions.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention, at [CDC.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus), is also maintaining important information regarding the virus and the steps you can take to protect your family and staff along with reducing the likelihood of its transmission.

As always, WSDA is a resource if you have food safety questions. Do not hesitate to contact us at [foodsafety@agr.wa.gov](mailto:foodsafety@agr.wa.gov) or 360-902-1876.