

Guideline for storage of alcohol-based hand and surface sanitizers

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Hand sanitizers and disinfectants are widely used on campus for daily disinfection of hands and surfaces during the COVID pandemic. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers/surface disinfectants are classified as “Flammable Liquid” substances, which means they have a flashpoint of less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Hand and surface sanitizers contain at least 60% alcohol (isopropyl or ethyl) or more.

The size of these containers can be anywhere from a few ounces to a gallon and could be used in office areas, laboratories, conference rooms, hallways, gyms or recreation rooms, etc. Just like other hazardous materials around us, we should be careful about using disinfectants since they are classified as flammable.

These are the general precautions for the storage of alcohol-based disinfectants in office areas:

1. Do *not* store near:
 - a. Electric panels or power strips
 - b. Ignition sources, heating devices, heating baseboards, and space heaters
 - c. Computers, electronics, electrical outlets, and switches
2. If you keep them on a shelf, protect them against falling and spills.
3. Keep them out of direct sunlight.
4. Store in a well-ventilated space if possible and keep cool.
5. If you keep them on the floor, use secondary containment.
6. Keep them away from oxidizers, reducing agents, strong acids, and bleach.
7. If you keep them in a lab, storing them in a flammable cabinet is the best choice.
8. The bottles should have a flammable label or word “**Flammable**” and an exclamation point label indicating the precautions to take when using this product (see hazard pictograms).
9. If alcohol-based sanitizer is spilled, all potential ignition sources must be immediately removed from the area to mitigate the possibility of a fire.
10. Any spilled alcohol-based sanitizer should be cleaned up with water immediately.
11. The maximum allowable quantity (MAQ) for storage of flammable materials are:
 - a. 30 Gallons for areas without a sprinkler system
 - b. 60 Gallons for areas with sprinklers OR stored in flammable liquids cabinets
 - c. 120 Gallons for areas with BOTH sprinklers and stored in flammable liquids cabinets

