



ANSI/AAMI standard anticipated this summer, don't wipe out on workstation cleaning

by Stephen Kovach

Q I heard that ANSI/AMMI ST 91 is going to be published this summer. Is this true?

A This standard was just put out for public comment (May 15, 2021). So, barring any major public review issues, it should be issued sometime in July or August. We all are waiting for these new standards to help us get to "best practice," in the care of all patients who undergo any type of endoscopy procedure.

Q Where I work, some people have started to wipe their workstation (table) in the assembly area. What are your thoughts on this practice?

A I am for this practice, but staff needs to understand why they should do this and know the correct way of wiping work surfaces.

As with anything, my position is that having some staff do something and other staff do something different opens the door for confusion in a department. I feel the department should put in place a policy for what staff should do concerning cleaning their workstation surface. The policy should be reviewed by a team to make sure it is consistent with any other policy within the medical facility.

The actual process of decontaminating a surface is the same for both cleaning and disinfection. Wiping should never be carried out in a circular motion, as this causes the wipe in its dirtiest state to be passed over an area which has just been cleaned. This point needs to be reinforced with staff, as a circular wiping pattern is the most comfortable and convenient but not the "best practice."

The correct technique is to wipe toward you in straight, horizontal lines each time overlapping the previous one by 10 to 25%. A contaminated wipe should not be passed over an area that has just been wiped, unless it is folded and refolded to provide a clean surface. Usually, quarterly folds are recommended but must be validated with each operator concerned since quarterly folds can lead to confusion of which surfaces of the wipe have been used.

In this case, wipes folded in half should be used. Surface wiping should be carried out from top to bottom, from back to front and from cleanest to dirtiest. The wipe itself should be constructed from a low particulate material.

My suggestion is the next time you are in a restaurant, watch how staff wipes off your table. Did they just mix the bugs around or really clean the surface? Most have no idea they are wiping incorrectly. Also, stop by your

microbiological lab in your facility and ask them to show you how they wipe off their workstations.

So, if you are going to wipe off your assembly workstation (table), learn to do it the right way. As I have said for years, "Keep it Clean!" **HPN**

References: Wiping guide - <http://pharmaceuticalvalidation.blogspot.com/2010/04/cleaning-of-isolators-and-bio-safety.html>

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The wrong way to wipe your work surface



Photo courtesy Stephen Kovach