

An excerpt from:

Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health-Care Facilities

Recommendations of CDC and the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC)

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RECOMMENDATIONS --- WATER

I. Controlling the Spread of Waterborne Microorganisms

- A. Practice hand hygiene to prevent the hand transfer of waterborne pathogens, and use barrier precautions (e.g., gloves) as defined by other guidelines (36,142-146).
Category IA
- B. Eliminate contaminated water or fluid environmental reservoirs wherever possible (e.g., in equipment or solutions) (142,147). Category IB
- C. Clean and disinfect sinks and wash basins on a regular basis by using an EPA-registered product as set by facility policies. Category II
- D. Evaluate for possible environmental sources (e.g., potable water) of specimen contamination when waterborne microorganisms (e.g., NTM) of unlikely clinical importance are isolated from clinical cultures (e.g., specimens collected aseptically from sterile sites or, if postprocedural, colonization after use of tap water in patient care) (148-151). Category IB
- E. Avoid placing decorative fountains and fish tanks in patient-care areas; ensure disinfection and fountain maintenance if decorative fountains are used in public areas of the health-care facility (152). Category IB

RATING CATEGORIES

Recommendations are rated according to the following categories:

Category IA. Strongly recommended for implementation and strongly supported by well-designed experimental, clinical, or epidemiologic studies.

Category IB. Strongly recommended for implementation and supported by certain experimental, clinical, or epidemiologic studies and a strong theoretic rationale.

Category IC. Required by state or federal regulation, or representing an established association standard. (Note: Abbreviations for governing agencies and regulatory citations are listed where appropriate. Recommendations from regulations adopted at state levels are also noted. Recommendations from AIA guidelines cite the appropriate sections of the standards.)

Category II. Suggested for implementation and supported by suggestive clinical or epidemiologic studies, or a theoretic rationale.

Unresolved Issue. No recommendation is offered. No consensus or insufficient evidence exists regarding efficacy.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Guidelines for environmental infection control in health-care facilities: recommendations of CDC and the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC)*. MMWR 2003;52 (No. RR-10):5,14.

Full report is available online at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5210a1.htm>