

NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Safety.

STATE FIRE MARSHAL AGENCY



Pete Ricketts, Governor

Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitizer in Schools

In light of the current health emergency, infection control has become an issue that reaches all parts of our lives, including in schools. The Nebraska State Fire Marshal's Office understands that increased measures to control the spread of viruses will be implemented in the upcoming school year and we would like to remind schools that fire safety must be considered when using alcohol-based hand sanitizers.

Many hand sanitizer products utilize between 60 to 80% ethyl alcohol. This concentration of alcohol, while very effective at sanitizing, requires us to consider the product a flammable liquid, i.e. a liquid that is easily ignited when exposed to an ignition source. Once ignited, it is very difficult to see this type of product burning, thus making it an even greater danger.

Here are the regulations for hand sanitizers in schools (Refer to Life Safety Code 15.3.2.4 for full Code language):

1. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensers must be installed in rooms or other spaces and cannot be placed in corridors (hallways) or exits.
2. The maximum size of a single alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispenser is 1.2 liters (.32 gallons).
3. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensers must be separated from each other by at least 48 inches in horizontal distance.
4. Storage of more than 5 gallons of alcohol-based hand sanitizer in a single location or space within a building is prohibited.
5. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensers must not be installed over, or directly adjacent to, an ignition source (electrical outlets are the most common ignition source).
6. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensers that are installed over carpet or other combustible flooring, are only permitted if the room has fire sprinklers installed.

The State Fire Marshal's Office wants to remind schools that alcohol-based hand rub dispensers can be placed in classrooms and other rooms that are separated from corridors. It is also acceptable to place dispensers with larger quantities of alcohol-based hand sanitizer at entrances *outside* the building.

Please contact our office if you have questions.

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