

EPA Issues Consumer Advisory on Products Claiming to Kill Coronavirus

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EPA issued another in a series of recent advisories aiming to clarify for consumers and companies what they need to know about disinfectant products claiming to kill the *coronavirus*. EPA is actively investigating the numerous tips and complaints it continues to receive concerning products marketed with possibly false and misleading *coronavirus*/COVID-19 related claims.

For some of these products, those claims have not been reviewed or accepted by EPA and, therefore, may present a risk to consumers, and healthcare providers in particular.

Products that claim to disinfect and kill or otherwise inhibit viruses, bacteria and other germs must be registered with EPA before they can be sold. A disinfectant cannot make legal claims of effectiveness against a particular pathogen, such as SARS-CoV-2, unless EPA has specifically approved the claim as part of the registration process. Registration requires that any claim be supported by valid test data and an EPA determination that the product works as intended and is safe to use.

Earlier this year, EPA issued a list of disinfectants (“List N”) that meet the agency’s criteria for use against the *coronavirus* (SARS-CoV-2, the strain of *coronavirus* that causes COVID-19). While the surface disinfectant products on List N have not been tested specifically against SARS-CoV-2, they are expected to work against the virus because they demonstrate efficacy against other viruses that are deemed harder-to-kill or another similar strain of *coronavirus*.

Please note that just because the product label states that it kills “99.5% of viruses,” this does not necessarily mean that it will kill *coronavirus*.

Consumers are reminded to follow the label directions for approved disinfectants — particularly regarding the amount of time the product must remain wet on the surface — to ensure effectiveness in killing the virus. Use of a disinfectant in a manner inconsistent with label directions can pose safety risks, both from contact with the pesticide and from a false belief that the surface has been cleaned of the pathogen.

See my prior [post on EPA enforcement activity](#) in this area, as well as a more detailed [description of EPA’s approval policy](#) for products deemed effective against SARS-CoV-2.

EPA's advisory is available [here](#). List N can be found at: www.epa.gov/ListN.