

Food Industry Sanitation Chemicals Safety Review

Overview:

Sanitation chemicals are used by all facets of the food and beverage industry. Bars, restaurants, and manufacturing companies continuously work to keep their establishments clean and safe, especially throughout the pandemic. Although the chemicals used are effective, when mishandled, they can potentially cause safety issues for staff members and customers.

Sanitation Simple Definition:

Periodic, scheduled cleaning using a specific procedure and chemicals. There are two parts to sanitizing a surface or equipment:

- **Part 1-** Removal of dirt, food debris and visible soil, typically using soap and “scrubbing”.
- **Part 2-** Application of a chemical that will kill disease-causing microbes. Many modern sanitation chemicals combine the “soap” and the “disease killing” chemical for ease of use.

Hazards:

- **Corrosive:** Many sanitizers are corrosive which means that accidental contact can cause eye and skin burns and, in some cases, application to the wrong surface can cause damage.
- **Reactivity:** Reactivity means that mixing the sanitizer with another chemical can cause a reaction resulting in sudden generation of heat, foam and even the explosion of a closed container.
- **Toxicity:** Many chemicals can be hazardous if they accidentally contact foods/beverages.

Important Safety Measures:

Sanitation chemicals should be stored *separate* from food and beverage areas. Store incompatible chemicals away from each other and keep sanitation chemicals out of the reach of customers, untrained personnel, and others. Locked cabinets and cages are recommended.

Always follow label instructions for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). At a minimum, safety glasses and rubber gloves should be used when applying most sanitizers. As the strength and quantity increase, more PPE is often required: face shields, synthetic aprons, sleeve guards, boots and even respirators may be required. Employees must be trained and required to wear necessary PPE.

Employee Information:

- All containers must be labeled – ask your chemical vender for a supply of extra labels.
- Safety Data Sheets (SDS) – SDS for all sanitation chemicals must be maintained and kept available to all employees. Make sure to ask your supplier.

CRITICALLY IMPORTANT – Instruct and Supervise Employees to Follow:

- All directions for PPE
- Precautions to take when mixing with other chemicals
- Safety instructions for quantity and application, including dilution and “dwell” time, to ensure sanitizer effectiveness

Instructions must be followed to ensure effective decontamination of surfaces and equipment in addition to the safety of those handling. Keep records of training on hand for personnel and make sure detailed records of all sanitation steps are accessible for all employees.

Our experienced commercial insurance team is committed to helping you navigate the complex challenges of the food and beverage industry. For more information, contact your Johnson Financial Group advisor or [connect with one today.](#)