

## HOW SHOULD RESTAURANTS CLEAN THEIR UNITS AFTER CORONAVIRUS DIAGNOSES?

As more restaurants discover workers with suspected coronavirus diagnoses, operators are finding ways to scrub the units from top to bottom and to allay customer concerns.

But what should those methods and protocols entail?

Nation's Restaurant News asked Mandy Sedlak, food safety and public health manager for Ecolab's Ecosure division, to offer her advice.

She says to stay calm, follow your company's communication policy, send the employee home and ask them to call their health care provider, and

disinfect high-touch guest areas. If the employee has stated they are confirmed to have COVID-19, the employee should self-isolate for 14 days and follow guidance from their doctor and the CDC. Best practice has been to not return



Restaurants should now wash and sanitize equipment more often.

until the employee is 72 hours symptom free.

What should you communicate to your staff and public?

Talk with employees about proper handwashing, not working when ill and proactively and properly disinfecting. For the public, ensure all customer-facing employees are giving the same message as one voice, speaking to the facts if customers ask questions. If they ask, tell them the action steps you are taking.

Among the recommended guidelines for "complete and thorough" cleaning:

- Use approved disinfectants with an EPA "emerging viral pathogen" claim.
- Wash and sanitize food contact surfaces and equipment on a more frequent basis.
- Change out utensils in the buffet line on a more frequent basis.

- Ensure all hand sinks are properly accessible and stocked with warm water, soap and paper towels.

- For disinfecting, focus on high-touch objects in the dining room. Door knobs, door handles and push plates, railings, light and air-control switches, faucets, toilet flush levers and the restrooms.

- For a deep clean, also consider taking everything off of the tables and properly disinfecting the table surfaces.

- Disinfect the service station, bar and lobby counters.

- Disinfect point-of-sale terminals and touchscreens and pagers, too. Carefully, not to damage electronics.

- Wash, rinse and sanitize any food contact wares such as stacked plates or scoops and tongs that are set out and not covered.

— Ron Ruggless