

BULLETIN

TECHNICAL BULLETIN (TB10)

SUBJECT:	COVID-19
DATE:	18 th March 2020
MODELS AFFECTED:	General products used for medical Oxygen supplied by GCE such as medical regulators, medical flowmeters, medical cylinder valve, Oxygen concentrator, and so forth.

GCE is aware that many users of our products have questions regarding how to effectively clean products that may have been used with patients suffering from COVID-19.

GCE has reviewed the situation in line with our current instructions for use and the changing environment of product usage. From this we have put together the following additional guidance on cleaning our products that provides information on choosing a suitable disinfectant, what to be aware of when cleaning and actions to avoid that could cause product damage. There are also specific recommendations GCE is making towards cylinder valves.

Choosing a suitable disinfectant

The most appropriate list of disinfectants that GCE can direct users to is provided by the United States Environment Protection Agency. List N is an approved list of disinfectants for use against SARS-CoV2.

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

The list covers a variety of brands, application methods and contact times. It is acknowledged that many of the brands listed may not be readily available in Europe, if a suitable brand is not available a choice should be made considering the active ingredient and specialist advice. GCE cannot instruct which method and disinfectant to use other than what is defined in IFU for respective product, but based on know-how of testing disinfectants with products we make the following recommendations:

- » Ready to use products are preferred
- » Mists and wipe are the preferred application method
- » Low contact times such as 1 minute are preferable
- » Do not use liquid pesticides
- » Do not use products with long contact times

Recommendations and information

COVID-19 can remain active for up to 72 hours on plastics and stainless steels (N van Doremalen, 2020)

Appropriate personal protective equipment must be used for the application of the disinfectant (in accordance with instructions) plus any residual risk of contamination, such as a full-face shield, mask and disposable gloves

GCE has conducted testing of various cleaning products and are aware of:

- » Pooling of certain liquid disinfectants can cause fogging of pressure gauge lenses and discolouration of plastics. In particular avoid pesticides and application methods which do not work with evaporation.
- » Isopropanol can cause degradation of O-rings and stripping of lubricants
- » Use of positive pressure application methods can cause product damage
- » Ultra Violet light is an alternative method but GCE does not have guidance on how it could be used
- » Cleaning and disinfecting of the outlet connection and operable areas (such as handwheel) is recommended between every use and step when the product is handled

Specific considerations for Cylinder Valves

GCE recognises that returning medical cylinders present a new and greater risk with regards to COVID19 infection to the supply chain.

Following a risk assessment, we can make the following recommendations:

Any cylinders returning without fill port protection must be segregated and risk assessed. If there is potential contamination of the fill port it presents a higher onward patient risk beyond the ordinary risk of the cylinder package exterior. Unresolved fill port contamination could migrate or be projected into the internals of the valve and cylinder. Cleaning of the fill port is a more challenging area to clean and must be conducted with care to not damage components or compromise the internal surfaces.

Contaminated fill ports could contaminate the filling hall fill adaptors which may then in turn contaminate other cylinders, filling adaptors should be cleaned between cylinders.

All cylinder packages must have fill port covers in place prior to release from the gas depot to ensure protection is in place during every customer interface

Where GCE guards are used the cleaning should follow our instructions for use. It is not expected that the guard needs to be removed to conduct adequate cleaning. This is due to the limited contact areas of GCE guarded valves.

Where GCE guards are not used and in particular where open guards are used, we recommend cleaning the entire valve body. For such cleaning GCE recommends suitable wipes.

Use of pumped disperses is strongly discouraged as it can causing pooling of disinfectant and are difficult to ensure even coverage

Cleaning and disinfecting of the touched areas of the product (guard, outlet, handwheels) should be conducted at every stage of the supply chain.

For any further questions please contact your GCE representative.

Regards,



Gareth Pemberton
Director of Innovation