

What an unusual and challenging school year it's been! *Healthy Schools News* remains committed to supporting your efforts to create healthier learning environments for your students and staff. Read on for practical, just-in-time resources and guidance. Please share with staff, parents, and networks. To view online or access past issues go to <https://www.epa.gov/children/healthy-schools-news-pacific-northwest>.



Hooray for Clean School Buses

Congratulations to the recipients of our [DERA School Bus Awards](#)! DERA stands for Diesel Emissions Reduction Act. EPA awarded \$615,000 to replace or retrofit 29 older diesel school buses in eight Idaho, Oregon, and Washington school districts. The new buses will reduce pollutants that are linked to health problems such as asthma and lung damage.

Healthy Schools and the American Rescue Plan



In March, the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act was signed into law. The package includes funding for the [ARP Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund](#). Funds are provided to state educational agencies and school districts to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the Nation's students. The

funds can help support health and safety measures consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance. This includes investing in resources to improve indoor air quality and reduce risk of exposure to environmental health hazards. Webinars and helpful tools to come!

On Demand Webinars: Ventilation and Cleaning

The [Healthy Indoor Environments in Schools Webinar Series](#) is part of EPA's Tools for Schools Program's ongoing commitment to stakeholders working to ensure that schools are healthy places to work and learn. Intended to help school staff in responding to concerns in their facilities, view these webinars to learn about best ventilation and cleaning practices for controlling viruses, and reducing the spread of infectious disease. Check regularly for new webinars!



May is Clean Air Month

Find resources to help you and your students breathe easier.

- EPA's [Air Quality Awareness Week webpage](#) spotlights wildfires and smoke, asthma and air quality, citizen science and air sensors, environmental justice and air quality, and air quality around the world.
- Visit EPA's [Asthma Awareness Month webpage](#). You'll find resources, infographics, and tips for reducing asthma triggers like pests, mold, and chemical irritants that can be present in classrooms.



CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

Best Practices During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Good Idea	Be Careful	Don't Do It
<p>Follow CDC, State, and Local Public Health Guidelines</p> <p>According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), COVID-19 is mainly spread through the air. The risk of getting the virus by touching a contaminated surface is thought to be low.</p> 	<p>Be Careful Using Disinfectants Around People with Asthma</p> <p>Disinfectants can trigger an asthma attack. If you have asthma, you may need to take extra precautions like avoiding areas where people are cleaning and disinfecting or making sure the space is well ventilated.</p> 	<p>Don't Ask Children or Students to Apply Disinfectants</p> <p>Disinfectants are powerful tools for controlling the spread of disease, and they can harm kid's health if used or stored incorrectly. Children and students should not apply disinfectants, and they should be kept out of children's reach.</p> 
<p>Clean Surfaces with Soap and Water</p> <p>Normal routine cleaning with soap and water lowers the risk of spreading COVID-19 by removing germs and dirt from surfaces. In most situations, cleaning is enough to reduce risk.</p> 	<p>Be Careful with Fogging, Fumigating, and Wide-Area or Electrostatic Spraying</p> <p>Make sure your product's label includes directions for the application method. Follow all directions, including precautions. If a product isn't labeled for these application methods, using it that way might be risky or ineffective.</p> 	<p>Don't Ignore the Label Directions</p> <p>If you don't follow the label directions, disinfectant products may be ineffective or unsafe. Do not apply disinfectants to skin, pets or food. Do not dilute disinfectants or mix them with other chemicals unless the label tells you to. Don't think that twice the amount will do twice the job.</p>  
<p>Use EPA-Registered Disinfectants According to Label Directions</p> <p>Disinfectants further lower the risk of spreading COVID-19 by using chemicals to kill germs. Use disinfectants on high-touch surfaces when you know or suspect someone around you is sick with COVID-19.</p>	<p>Be Careful With UV Lights or Ozone Generators</p> <p>UV lights or ozone generators may be risky or ineffective. EPA cannot verify if or when it is appropriate to use these devices. Check out the guidance at: go.usa.gov/xHckJ</p> 	<p>Don't Use Unregistered Disinfectants</p> <p>If a product says that it kills SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), but it doesn't have an EPA registration number, it may not be safe or effective. Federal law requires disinfectants to be registered with EPA.</p> 

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2021-04/documents/cleaning-disinfecting-one-pager.pdf>

Healthy School NEWS is published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 10. Region 10 includes the states of Washington, Idaho, Alaska and Oregon and the tribes within those boundaries. For general information about school environmental health or to provide feedback on this newsletter, please contact Andrea Lindsay at lindsay.andrea@epa.gov.

To be added to or removed from the distribution list, please email lindsay.andrea@epa.gov with your request. Contact Region 10's Public Environmental Resource Center, the education, publication and information gateway to EPA's Region 10 Office, for free publications and educational resources for your school. Call (800) 424-4EPA or email epa-seattle@epa.gov.

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