

Gila District Procedures for washing hands with soap and water in the field for protection against COVID 19

The SARS CoV2 virus, which causes the disease COVID 19, is spread primarily by inhaling the virus when it is airborne, and secondarily through touch transmission to your eyes, nose or mouth.

CDC guidelines indicate the primary method of protection from touch transmission is washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Where water is not available, a hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol may be used, although this should be followed up with soap and water washing as soon as water is available.

Because water is rarely available in the field in much of the Gila District, hand sanitizer is regularly used for hand hygiene.

Because hand sanitizer has been in short supply recently, and because soap and water is the preferred method, Gila District has developed the following procedure for using soap and water in the field:

Water containers

- must have a spout that allows a flow of water without touching the container while the water flows
- must be labeled do distinguish that they are for hand washing only
- should be assigned to one person, not shared
- must be inspected regularly to ensure that they are not leaking

Soap

- Can be any regular bar or liquid soap intended for the hands.
- Does not need to be labeled “antibacterial” (see also <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/show-me-the-science-handwashing.html>)
- Bar soap must be stored in a sturdy waterproof container

Hand washing procedure

- Remove gloves
 - Grasp the outside of one glove at the wrist. Do not touch your bare skin
 - Peel the glove away from your body, pulling it inside out
 - Using only your gloved hand, crumple the glove you just removed in the palm of your gloved hand
 - Peel off the second glove by putting your fingers inside the glove at the top of your wrist

- Turn the second glove inside out while pulling it away from your body, leaving the first glove inside the second
 - Dispose of the gloves. Do not reuse the gloves
- Position water container and soap container, open soap container
- Turn on spigot and wet your hands
- Turn off spigot and lather with soap
- Lather the outside of the soap container
- Lather the spigot
- Add more soap to your hands if needed to relather
- Rub your hands together, including under nails, for 20 seconds
- Turn on spigot and rinse the outside of the soap container, the spigot and your hands
 - With bar soap, after placing soap back in container, rinse hands again
- Turn off spigot and replace containers for travel.

Risk Controls

This hand washing procedure is sufficient as long as all other COVID-19 precautions for field work are followed (vehicle travel is solo, gloves are replaced immediately if torn, for picking up trash work gloves are worn over nitrile gloves, avoid touching your skin with outside of gloves). If these precautions are not followed, washing the spigot and soap container with the same soap as your hands may not be sufficient to prevent cross-contamination.