

NEWS BRIEF

Provided by: Relation Insurance Services

FDA Urges Consumers to Check That Their Hand Sanitizer Is Safe Before Use

Hand hygiene is an important response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends washing hands with soap and water. If those aren't available, using a hand sanitizer can help you avoid getting sick and spreading germs.

However, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is warning consumers that some hand sanitizers are dangerous to use. The FDA's first warning was issued in June 2020 after the agency discovered nine brands of hand sanitizer that contained methanol, or wood alcohol, which is a substance that can be toxic when ingested or absorbed through the skin. Since this first discovery, the agency launched an investigation into the safety of hand sanitizers.

This investigation revealed serious safety concerns with various hand sanitizers on the market, leading to some being recalled and the FDA warning consumers to refrain from using more than 150 sanitizers.

What does this mean for me?

Consumers should read the labels of hand sanitizer they're considering buying or already own to make sure it's safe for use. Specifically, the FDA directs consumers to check the label to see if a sanitizer:

- Was tested by the FDA
- Has been found to contain methanol or 1-propanol, which are toxic substances
- Contains methanol
- Has been tested for and confirmed to have microbial contamination

The FDA is warning consumers to refrain from using more than 150 sanitizers.

- Is being actively recalled by the manufacturer or distributor
- Contains less than the required amount of ethyl or isopropyl alcohol, or benzalkonium chloride to be considered effective
- Is made at the same facility as products that have been tested and deemed unsafe by the FDA

The FDA has compiled an interactive [do-not-use-list](#) that consumers can use to quickly identify whether their hand sanitizer is safe for use. The agency has also released [instructions](#) for using the tool.

If your hand sanitizer is on the do-not-use-list, stop using it immediately and dispose of it in a hazardous waste container. Do not pour the sanitizer down the drain.

For more information on the FDA's warning, click [here](#).

