

## Hand Sanitizer – COMPARISON CHART

 HandSan Hand Sanitizer	Brand MICRO (made in brewery/distillery/other)	Brand INDUSTRIAL (Made in Oil/Gas plant)	Brand IMPORTED (made in foreign country)
Size	VARIOUS	VARIOUS	VARIOUS
NPN from Health Canada	YES	SOME	SOME
Active Ingredient	ISOPROPYL ALCOHOL	*ETHANOL	*ETHANOL
Dry out skin	NO	SOME	SOME
Scent	Key lime or unscented	STALE ALCOHOL	GAS SMELL
Facility type	CLASS 1 DIVISION 1 CHEMICAL LAB / BLENDING FACILITY	BREWERY DISTILLERY OTHER	INDUSTRIAL PLANT
Applicator cap	YES	NO	NO
Lot number as required by Health Canada	YES	SOME	YES
Expiry date as required by Health Canada	YES	SOME	YES
Purity of Raw ingredients	USP / FOOD	N/A	N/A
Container type	PLASTIC WITH MICRO APPLICATOR CAP OR SPRAY HEAD	GLASS OR PLASTIC LIQUOR TYPE BOTTLE WITH SCREW CAP, PLASTIC BAG OR CAN	PAIL, POSES FIRE RISK WHEN TRANSFERING TO CONTAINERS FOR USE, ADDITIONAL PROPER STORAGE REQUIRED

\*Please note, Health Canada (April 15, 2020) has authorized manufacturers' to temporarily use TECH grade Ethanol (contains impurities) Health Canada also states that Hand Sanitizer using TECH grade Ethanol should be only used in moderation, and not for children or if you have cuts or abrasions on your hands. **Chemfax HandSan uses only USP/Food grade Isopropyl Alcohol, USP/Food grade Glycerin and USP/Food grade Hydrogen Peroxide, Chemfax will not comprise on safety or quality of ingredients used in HandSan. World Health Organization state that liquid hand sanitizer is more effective than gels.**

\*\*Based on information provided on respective manufacturers' websites, the comparison is based across many brands of Hand Sanitizer available in Canada and is not specific to any particular brand.

# Health Canada is temporarily authorizing the use of technical-grade ethanol in hand sanitizer products: Always follow the label directions when using alcohol-based hand sanitizers

Report a Concern  
(<http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/report-signalez/index-eng.php>)

<b>Starting date:</b>	April 15, 2020
<b>Posting date:</b>	April 15, 2020
<b>Type of communication:</b>	Advisory
<b>Subcategory:</b>	Drugs
<b>Source of recall:</b>	Health Canada
<b>Issue:</b>	Important Safety Information
<b>Audience:</b>	General Public, Healthcare Professionals, Hospitals
<b>Identification number:</b>	RA-72739

Last updated: 2020-04-15

## Summary

- **Product:** Hand sanitizer products made with technical-grade ethanol.
- **Issue:** Health Canada is temporarily authorizing the use of technical-grade ethanol for use in hand sanitizer products. Health Canada is advising Canadians to always follow the label directions when using alcohol-based hand sanitizers.
- **What to do:** The best way to limit the spread of COVID-19 is by washing your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If this is not possible, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, with at least 60% alcohol, that has been approved by Health Canada. Always follow the label directions when using alcohol-based hand sanitizers.

- [Media enquiries](#)
- [Public enquiries](#)

OTTAWA - Proper hygiene and disinfection is essential during the COVID-19 outbreak to reduce the risk of infection. Washing your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds remains the most effective way to limit the spread of COVID-19. If soap and water are not available, a hand sanitizer, with at least 60% alcohol, that has been approved by Health Canada should be used.

There are a variety of hand sanitizers that meet Health Canada's requirements for safety, efficacy and quality and have been approved. They are listed (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/hand-sanitizer.html>) on Health Canada's website.

Recent data released by Statistics Canada (<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/62f0014m/62f0014m2020004-eng.htm>) shows that there was a sevenfold increase in sales of hand sanitizer in mid-March compared to sales during the same one-week period last year. This high demand has led to shortages of raw materials, such as ethanol, which has led to searches for substitute ingredients.

Hand sanitizers are normally made with United States Pharmacopeia (USP) or food grade ethanol. However, in light of the current shortage of hand sanitizers, Health Canada recently temporarily modified its rules (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/natural-non-prescription/legislation-guidelines/guidance-documents/covid19-ethanol-alcohol-hand-sanitizers.html>) to allow manufacturers to use other types of ethanol for hand sanitizer without compromising safety, efficacy and quality. Health Canada is temporarily authorizing the use of technical-grade ethanol on a short-term and case-by-case basis, under specific conditions. This authorization is based on a thorough analysis of the benefits and risks to Canadians and will end as soon as USP- or food-grade ethanol can once again be produced in sufficient quantities to meet increased demand.

Technical-grade ethanol has more impurities than USP- and food-grade ethanol. One of these impurities is acetaldehyde, which is also found in alcohol and food we consume as well as products we use on our skin, such as cosmetics. Like most health products, hand sanitizers containing acetaldehyde can pose health risks if used more frequently and for a longer period than directed.

Health Canada has assessed the risks and benefits of hand sanitizers containing technical-grade ethanol and has concluded that, when used as directed and for a short period, the public health benefit to limit the spread of COVID-19 outweighs the risks. Based on its risk assessment, Health Canada is taking action immediately to ensure the safety of these products.

Specifically, Health Canada is limiting the period during which technical-grade ethanol can be used to produce hand sanitizers and is strengthening the labelling requirements for these products as follows:

Manufacturers that use technical-grade ethanol in their hand sanitizers must provide additional information on their product labels to support the safe use of these products. This includes:

- clearly indicating that technical-grade ethanol is included as an ingredient;
- specific directions for use and warnings that these products are intended for adult use only, that they should not be used on broken or damaged skin, that they should not be used by women who are pregnant or breastfeeding, and that they should not be inhaled; and,
- information on how to report any adverse reactions to Health Canada.

As with all health products, Health Canada is advising Canadians to always follow the label directions when using alcohol-based hand sanitizers.

## What you should do

- To limit the spread of COVID-19, wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If this is not possible, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol that has been approved by Health Canada.
- Always follow the label directions on hand sanitizer products.
- Check whether a product and its claims have been authorized by Health Canada by searching the [List of Hand Sanitizers Authorized by Health Canada](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/hand-sanitizer.html) (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/hand-sanitizer.html>). Authorized hand sanitizers have an eight-digit Drug Identification Number (DIN) or Natural Product Number (NPN).
- Some hand sanitizers that may not fully meet Health Canada requirements and may not have a DIN or NPN on the label are being permitted for sale as an interim measure given the shortage of supply of hand sanitizers because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Check for these products by searching the [List of Products Accepted under Interim Measure](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/products-accepted-under-interim-measure.html). (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/products-accepted-under-interim-measure.html>)
- Report any adverse reactions to Health Canada by calling 1-866-234-2345.

More information [about](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/buying-drugs-over-internet.html) (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/buying-drugs-over-internet.html>) buying health products safely is available on Health Canada's [website](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/topics/buying-using-drug-health-products-safely.html) (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/topics/buying-using-drug-health-products-safely.html>). Health Canada will be posting the list of technical-grade ethanol producers who supply manufacturers of hand sanitizers, along with contact information should you want to get specific information about their product.

For the latest and most up-to-date information on COVID-19, visit [Canada.ca/coronavirus](http://www.canada.ca/coronavirus) (<http://www.canada.ca/coronavirus>).

## Media enquiries

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## Public enquiries

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