The Difference Between Clean And Sanitary

First of all, there IS a difference between clean and sanitary. “Clean”, means that soil and food are visibly removed from surfaces. When items are “sanitized” it means that those surfaces have a reduction of pathogens. There still may be microorganisms present, but they are at safe levels.

For sanitizing to be effective, surfaces must first be free of grease, soil and food particles. Sanitizers cannot penetrate through debris; so all debris must be removed before sanitizing. Measure the strength of the sanitizer with pH litmus papers to ensure it is the correct strength. If sanitizers are too strong they are toxic. If they are too weak they will not sanitize. The water temperature should be approximately 75°F.

Tools For Cleaning

To make the job of cleaning easier and more effective, it is important to use the right tool for the right job. It is also important to realize that is cleaning tools are not stored properly they can be the cause of contamination.

**Buckets** - Provided labeled buckets for sanitizer. Sanitizer strength for Quaternary Ammonium is up to 200 PPM or per manufacturer’s recommendation. For chlorine the strength should be 50-100 PPM. Store the buckets away from food. Storing on the lowest shelves and off the floor is best. Change sanitizer solutions frequently. If the sanitizer becomes cloudy, it is too dirty to reduce bacteria on the wiping cloths.

**Wiping Cloths** - Wiping cloths can spread harmful pathogens rather than clean surfaces if not used correctly. To prevent wiping cloths from being a source of contamination, store them in a sanitizer solution when not in use instead of leaving them on counters and cutting boards.

Wiping cloths used for wiping food spills should be used for that purpose only. To prevent cross-contamination, do not use the same cloths to wipe the floors or to clean trashcans. Also keep cloths used to wipe raw meat spills separate from wiping cloths used for ready-to-eat and cooked food spills.

**Sponges** - Sponges must not be used in place of wiping cloths or used to wash dishes. Sponges often harbor bacteria that often cannot be killed by sanitizer solution.

**Brushes** - Brushes help apply more pressure than wiping cloths. The bristles help loosen soil. If brushes are worn out they will not clean effectively and can be the source of contamination. Choose the right brush for the right job. Lacquered wood or plastic brushes with synthetic bristles work best.

**Scouring Pads** - Heavily soiled equipment, floor and pots and pans may sometimes be in need of steel wool or other abrasives. Steel wool and other types of metal scouring pads can sometimes break up and leave residue that may contaminate food. You may want to use nylon scouring pads instead.

**Mops and Brooms** - Mop heads can either be all cotton or synthetic. You may need more than one bucket and wringer. It is always a good idea to have both light and heavy duty mops and brooms.