



Environmental Marking with Fluorescent Detergent

Environmental marking is one way of assessing cleaning practices at your facility. The fluorescent detergent method is a low-cost, easy-implementation method that will allow you to evaluate routine practices and educate your frontline staff. The Infection Preventionist and the EVS Manager should work together to audit room cleanliness.

What you will need:

- Fluorescent detergent (i.e., Tide)
- Q-tips
- Plastic cups (medicine cups)
- UV flashlight
- Best performed by 2 individuals working together

Step-by-step process (for 1 room)

1. Perform hand hygiene
2. Don gloves
3. Dispense 5-10mL of detergent in a medicine cup
4. Carefully immerse 3-5 Q-tips in the cup with detergent (make sure tips are soaked in detergent)
5. Select and document in a [checklist sheet](#) 3-5 spots in the room that will be marked

Before environmental cleaning:

6. Mark each spot with a single detergent-soaked Q-tip (make sure not to leave a mark that is visible to the eye)
7. Dispose each Q-tip in another clean plastic cup after using it
8. Dispose of used medicine cups to limit cross-contamination
9. Doff gloves
10. Perform hand hygiene
11. Allow EVS personnel to proceed with cleaning of the room as established

After environmental cleaning:

12. After environmental cleaning is complete, audit marked sites with a flashlight and document missed spots in your [checklist sheet](#)
13. Review results with EVS staff and provide education as needed

Additional recommendations and resources

- Rotate the spots you mark
- High-touch surfaces examples: bed frames, bed rails, tray tables, bedside tables, moveable lamps, door handles, chair armrests, bathroom handles, faucets, light switches, bed controls, monitor controls, IV/medication poles
- Repeat environmental auditing frequently
- Start with a higher frequency, such as 2 or 3 times a week, covering different EVS shifts
- Once environmental cleaning effectiveness reaches 90%, continue with monthly and then quarterly audits.
- Share EVS assessment data in QAPI and IP meetings
- [CDC Options for Evaluating Environmental Cleaning](#)
- [Hektoen Environmental Marking Training Video](#)