



**U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement**

July 8, 2020

The Honorable Mark Takano
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Takano:

Thank you for your June 15, 2020 letter to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) regarding the use of a disinfectant spray, known as HDQ Neutral, at the Adelanto ICE Processing Center (Adelanto).

ICE is committed to maintaining the highest facility standards of cleanliness and sanitation, safe work practices, and control of hazardous substances and equipment to ensure the environmental health and safety of detainees, staff, volunteers, and contractors from injury and illness. Disinfectant formulations used at Adelanto are compliant with detention standards,¹ registered by the Environmental Protection Agency, and used according to manufacture instruction for routine cleaning and maintenance of the facility, contrary to any assertion or claim otherwise. Staff and detainees receive safety instruction as necessary for living area-related assignments, such as working with cleaning products to clean general use areas.

Each facility has established a system for storing, issuing, using, and maintaining inventories of and accountability for hazardous materials. The facility program is supervised by an individual trained in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards. Every individual who uses a hazardous substance must be trained in accordance with OSHA standards, be knowledgeable about and follow all prescribed precautions, wear personal protective equipment when indicated, and promptly report hazards or spills to the designated authority.

Protective eye, face, and other appropriate equipment (such as footwear, gloves, gowns, and/or aprons) are required where there is a reasonable probability of injury preventable by such equipment. Every department or other area of the facility using hazardous substances shall maintain a file of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) that includes a list of the locations where hazardous substances are stored, along with a diagram and legend of these locations. Staff and detainees who do not read English shall not be authorized to work with these materials. All toxic and caustic materials must be stored in secure areas, in their original containers, and with the manufacturer's label intact on each container. Only authorized staff shall draw/dispense these

¹ ICE detention standards concerning environmental health and safety may be reviewed here: <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/detention-standards/2011/1-2.pdf>.

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substances, in accordance with the applicable MSDS. Please reference the detention standards for additional background on control of poisonous and other toxic substances.

Thank you again for your letter; enclosed are responses to the questions raised in your letter. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 732-4200.

Sincerely,

Sean Hackbarth
for

Raymond Kovacic
Assistant Director
Office of Congressional Relations

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Juan Vargas

**U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Response to
Representatives Mark Takano and Juan Vargas' June 15, 2020 Letter**

1. How long has the disinfectant spray HDQ Neutral been in use at the Adelanto Detention Facility? How often is the spray being used daily?

Response: The Adelanto ICE Processing Center (Adelanto) has been using HDQ Neutral since opening as a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention facility in 2011. For increased sanitization due to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), the facility has been disinfecting/sanitizing high-touch areas in detainee housing, public access areas, administrative areas, and common areas several times a day.

2. Are there other disinfectants being used at the Adelanto Detention Facility?

Response: No other disinfectant/sanitizer is used at Adelanto to mitigate COVID-19 risk.

3. What precautionary measures are being taken and what personal protective equipment or materials are being issued to detainees for the purposes of limiting their exposure to HDQ Neutral during disinfectant treatments?

Response: Staff and detainees receive safety instruction as necessary for living area-related assignments, such as working with cleaning products to clean general use areas. Each facility has established a system for storing, issuing, using, and maintaining inventories of and accountability for hazardous materials. The facility program is supervised by an individual trained in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards. Every individual who uses a hazardous substance must be trained in accordance with OSHA standards, be knowledgeable about and follow all prescribed precautions, wear personal protective equipment when indicated, and promptly report hazards or spills to the designated authority.

HDQ Neutral has been used at Adelanto for nearly 10 years. The concentrated solution is diluted (2 ounces per gallon) before use, in accordance with instructions provided by the manufacturer. Additionally, air circulation and ventilation are closely monitored and reviewed throughout the facility, with new air filtered through every 20 minutes. Further, representatives from Spartan, the manufacturing company, make routine visits to the detention facility to calibrate machines that dilute the formulation and to ensure dilution is safely performed only by detention facility staff.

Protective eye, face, and other appropriate equipment (such as footwear, gloves, gowns, and/or aprons) are required where there is a reasonable probability of injury preventable by such equipment. Every department or other area of the facility using hazardous substances shall maintain a file of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) that includes a list of the locations where hazardous substances are stored, along with a diagram and legend of these locations. Staff and detainees who do not read English shall not be authorized to work with these materials. All toxic and caustic materials must be stored in secure areas, in their

original containers, and with the manufacturer's label intact on each container. Only authorized staff shall draw/dispense these substances, in accordance with the applicable MSDS.

- 4. How many detainees have experienced adverse side effects linked to HDQ Neutral? How many detainees have requested medical attention?**

Response: Currently, there are no known detainees who have experienced side effects linked to the use of HDQ Neutral, and there are currently no detainees who have requested medical care related to the use of HDQ Neutral at Adelanto.

- 5. How are detainees being treated for side effects linked to exposure to HDQ Neutral or other disinfectants being used at the Adelanto Detention Facility?**

Response: There are currently no known detainees at Adelanto presenting with side effects related to exposure to HDQ Neutral or any other disinfectants.

- 6. Are there other ICE detention facilities nationwide where HDQ Neutral is being used for the purpose of preventing the spread of COVID-19?**

Response: The disinfectant currently in use at Adelanto is also used in six other facilities managed by GEO Group that hold ICE detainees.

- 7. Are there safe, non-toxic alternatives that may be used that are proven as effective at disinfecting surfaces for the purposes of preventing the spread of COVID-19? If so, has DHS or the GEO Group considered using these alternatives at detention facilities?**

Response: HDQ Neutral is a disinfectant registered by the Environmental Protection Agency and, when used according to the manufacturer's instruction, is safe for use as a disinfectant/sanitizer in a detention facility.