

FDA to Allow Certain Hand Sanitizer Impurities

The Food and Drug Administration has announced that it will allow certain impurities in alcohol-based sanitizers to meet the public health demands during the COVID-19 pandemic. The relaxed guidelines will directly affect fuel ethanol companies that began making sanitizer at the beginning of the pandemic.

The FDA is working with industry to ensure that harmful levels of impurities are not present if ethanol is used in these products. Based on careful review and consideration of available data, we are specifying interim levels of certain impurities that we have determined can be tolerated for a relatively short period of time, given the emphasis on hand hygiene during the COVID-19 public health emergency and to avoid exacerbating access issues for alcohol-based hand sanitizer."

FDA

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This announcement is in direct contrast to the agency's position in April, when it told several fuel ethanol companies that their sanitizers didn't meet safety standards. Two ingredients under particular scrutiny are acetaldehyde, a carcinogen, and benzene.

Sources:

- *U.S. temporarily to allow certain impurities in hand sanitizer* – Reuters
- *U.S. calls ingredients in some ethanol-based hand sanitizers unsafe* – Reuters