

Hand Sanitizer Storage

By: John Juresic, Loss Control Consultant, Thomas McGee, L.C.

Acceptable Locations and Quantities

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to top the subjects of conversation there has been another conversation emerging concerning the correct storage and dispensing locations for hand sanitizers and the quantities that are acceptable. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 the use of a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol should be utilized to help prevent the spread germs and disease. With that, there has been a growing concern with the storage of alcohol-based hand sanitizers (ABHS) in medium to large quantities.

ABHS that follow CDC guidelines would typically have a flashpoint around 63°F which classifies them as a 1B flammable, according to the NFPA 30, Flammable and Combustible Liquids Code. The use of ABHS should be limited to 1.2-liters in rooms, corridors, and areas open to corridors. The quantity increases to 2-liters of ABHS if there is a separation from the suites or rooms to the corridor. ABHS dispensers shall be at least 4-feet apart. If the floors are carpeted, then the building must have a fire suppression fully automated sprinkler system in place. The maximum amount of ABHS in use in a building should not exceed 10-gallons.

The Maximum Allowable Quantities (MAQ) for storage of ABHS is 5-gallons in a non-sprinkler building. ABHS cannot be stored in a basement. The MAQ for ABHS is 120-gallons in a warehouse, which should have a ceiling height of at least 20-feet and should not exceed 30-feet. If the ABHS is stacked on racks or palletized, then there should be at least 5-feet of clearance from the top of the stack to the ceiling of the warehouse. If you are planning on exceeding 120-gallon, you need to consult with your local Fire Marshall to discuss appropriate storage of such Class 1B Flammable Liquids.

You may be able to increase the MAQ of the ABHS by placing them in a flammable storage cabinet. This could increase the MAQ by 100 percent, which could be as much as 240-gallons. If the area also has a fire protection automatic sprinkler system, then you may also be able to increase the MAQ by another 100 percent, which could allow you to store 480-gallons of ABHS. Both additions should be consulted with the local Fire Marshall to verify that you are following NFPA 30 and NFPA 11.

Editor's Note:

The KING Safety Matters newsletter is published monthly to provide general safety information. It is not a substitute for adequate safety training, or intended to provide complete safety information or training, on any specific subject. The information contained herein is intended to assist safety efforts and increase safety awareness.

In order to ensure the contents of the newsletter are helpful and important to you, please feel free to send comments, suggestions and feedback to:

John Juresic
Loss Control Consultant
Thomas McGee L.C.
jjuresic@thomasmcgee.com

Kevin McFarland
President
KING
kevin@leadingagekansas.org



So, identify the current quantity of ABHS you have at your facility, both in use and in storage. For ABHS in use, keep the dispensing containers' volume below 1.2-liters so that you are following NFPA requirements. Keep a distance of at least 4-feet between dispensing units. Calculate the total volume of in-use ABHS and make sure it is below 10-gallons.

If your building is not fully sprinklered, then you should keep your volume of ABHS below 5-gallons. If you have access to a warehouse for storage, then you can store up to 120-gallons of excess ABHS. This amount may increase depending on your storage options, such as flammable cabinets and a fully automated sprinkler system in the warehouse. When increasing the amount over the MAQ of 120-gallons you should consult with your local Fire Marshall to verify NFPA requirements are being followed.

*Reference: NFPA
Risk Strategies*

