RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES DURING DROUGHT AND WATER CONSERVATION

Water is essential in the fight against SAR-COV-2.

- A minimum of 100 liters per patient per day are needed to treat Acute Respiratory Infections.
- A minimum of 5 liters of water are needed per medical consultation.
- Each person needs a minimum of 15 liters per day for drinking, cooking, and basic hygiene.¹
- Effective hand hygiene is a critical prevention measure.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR

- Provide universal access to public hand hygiene stations, with instructions for their correct use.
- Ensure continuous safe water supply to health care facilities.
- Ensure long term care facilities and enclosed community spaces for the elderly have continuous safe water delivery.
- Ensure access to safe water within a maximum of 500 meters from the residence.
- Advocate to uninterrupted access to at least 15 liters of safe water a day for all the population.
- Install temporary storage tanks in underserved areas and where there is interrupted service with residual chlorine levels of 0.5 mg/L.
- Ensure water bowsers and tanker trucks have a residual chlorine level of 0.5-1 mg/L.
- Ensure residual chlorine throughout the supply system of 0.5 mg/L at point of use.
- Strengthen water quality surveillance actions, especially in the most affected areas.
- Promote safe water storage at the households, like elevated buckets with lids and taps.
- Promote low-cost technologies for ensuring water quality such as household water filters.
- The health sector should work with the water sector and other relevant sectors to define and implement intervention.
- Advocate for intersectoral participation (e.g. water sector, agriculture) in the countries' emergency and disaster committees
- Repair leaking pipes.
- Institute a ban on the use of hose pipes.
- Recommend the use of low flow flush toilet systems (by design or retrofitted) in drought prone areas.
- Use prevention interventions that have been shown to be effective against SARS-COV-2.

¹ The Sphere Handbook 2018.
• Do not wash public built environments (streets, pavements, parking lots, etc.) for decontamination against SARS-COV-2.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL SETTINGS
• Maintain faucets and toilets.
• Fix drips and leaks.
• Wash hands for the required 40-60 seconds without letting the faucet run; Water is only needed for wetting hands and rinsing hands at the end.
• Run washing machines with a full load of laundry.
• Develop communication materials on water conservation and appropriate use according to national norms.
• Build capacity on nationally appropriate water storage techniques that do not allow vector proliferation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEALTH CARE FACILITIES
• Improve access to hand hygiene facilities and practices in health care facilities for both workers and the public.
• Use disinfection solutions of 0.05%, 0.1% and 0.5% in accordance with national norms and the table below.
• Use a bucket of water, not a hose pipe, to wash vehicles used for patient transfer before disinfection.
• Use a 1.5-L polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottle to wash each waste container, rinse then disinfect 0.1% hypochlorite solution and let air dry.
• Ensure a minimum of 3 days of water storage, based on usage data, to ensure normal levels of usage where water supply is interrupted.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PUBLIC
• Wash dishes in a basin of water, instead of under a running tap. Rinse in a separate basin of water.
• Soak pots and pans, instead of letting the water run while scraping them.
• Do not wash public or private vehicles that are not used for patient transfer.
• Flush the toilet only when it contains solid human waste.
• Place facial tissues and other hygiene products in waste bins, not the toilet.
• Avoid the use of the public water supply for irrigation:
  o Use drip irrigation instead of sprinkles.
  o Use rainwater catchment where possible.
  o Reuse grey water from laundry and dish washing to water plants.
Sodium hypochlorite concentration | Disinfection solution concentration
---|---|---
0.05% | 0.1% | 0.5%
For handwashing and laundry | For surface, floor, and cleaning utensil disinfection and for mortuaries | For body fluid spills (blood, vomit, etc.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sodium hypochlorite concentration</th>
<th>Sodium hypochlorite</th>
<th>Water</th>
<th>Sodium hypochlorite</th>
<th>Water</th>
<th>Sodium hypochlorite</th>
<th>Water</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1%</td>
<td>50 ml</td>
<td>950 ml</td>
<td>100 ml</td>
<td>900 ml</td>
<td>500 ml</td>
<td>500 ml</td>
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<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>15 ml</td>
<td>985 ml</td>
<td>30 ml</td>
<td>970 ml</td>
<td>154 ml</td>
<td>846 ml</td>
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<td>4%</td>
<td>13 ml</td>
<td>987 ml</td>
<td>25 ml</td>
<td>975 ml</td>
<td>125 ml</td>
<td>875 ml</td>
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<td>5%</td>
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<td>995 ml</td>
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If you do not have soap and water, 70% alcohol gel or Hydrogen Peroxide, a sodium hypochlorite disinfectant solution at 0.05% concentration could be used to wash your hands. However, this is the least recommended option, since frequent use can lead to allergies, dermatitis, depigmentation, and even asthma.