

Eye Opener: Salon Operators Substituting Disinfectant?

By Brenda Fishbaugh

I recently asked salon operators if they have a substitute product they use for cleaning sunbeds and goggles if they run out of their everyday cleaning solution (a misnomer; you really need to call it bed *disinfectant*, since it kills pathogens).

Robert Ashe, owner of Sun Seekers in Stratham, NH, says that he always re-orders bed disinfectant when his is about halfway gone. “I would not consider being out of tanning bed disinfectant!” he exclaims, citing three main reasons: **1)** he doesn’t want to use any chemical that would harm his acrylic shields and block UV transmission; **2)** he doesn’t want to risk irritating his tanners’ skin with

Coming soon: How to properly clean your sunbeds and deep-clean your acrylics.

products not made for skin contact; and **3)** he wants to ensure the solution is killing any pathogens and other possibly transmitted diseases. Perfect answer, Robert!

Many salon owners aren’t aware that acrylics can’t be exposed to any product containing alcohol or ammonia, as these ingredients (and many similar compounds) will cloud acrylics and keep them from transmitting UV to the tanner. So, switching to Lysol, rubbing alcohol, vinegar and water or Barbacide (a common beauty salon disinfectant) could ruin an

acrylic shield, even if these cleaning products are diluted! Many products might sanitize, but they don’t meet hospital disinfection standards and aren’t meant for skin contact *or* acrylic contact. And keep this in mind: you are required by law to use and EPA-certified, hospital-grade disinfectant on any surface in the salon that someone will stand on with bare feet or lay down on naked – and you can be subject to local fines.

Skin irritation is the second big factor for your consideration. Products not made for cleaning sunbeds may not be designed for skin contact. Remember: you are asking people to lay on the freshly cleaned acrylic that

may have chemical residue. When mixed according to directions, sunbed disinfectants *are* designed to be non-irritating to skin.

The third factor is ensuring that every tanner lays on a germ-free sunbed! “When choosing a salon disinfectant, make sure to look at all of the bacteria and viruses it kills,” says Robert Urfer, president of Lucas Products, makers of Lucasol disinfectant. “The more kill claims, the better the product.” He advises checking the label to see that it says, *For use in tanning spas or tanning salons*. “Furthermore, if you

use it for soaking goggles, the label should also state that it can be used on protective eyewear,” he continues.

You are required to clean sunbeds with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved, hospital grade disinfectant that was made for use in tanning salons. A salon operator suggested substituting diluted anti-bacterial hand soap for sunbed disinfectant; although this would potentially handle the anti-bacterial aspect and skin contact aspect, hand soap doesn’t meet the EPA cleaning standards, and could contain chemicals that would damage the acrylic shield.

“A tanning salon *can’t* run out of disinfectant cleaner formulated just for sunbeds and goggles!” exclaims salon owner, Rhonda Massey Shaffer Culligan, of Coral Springs, FL. She says there is no other “safe” option for acrylics and for contact with a tanner’s skin! “It is an essential item for running a compliant tanning salon, like having cash in your cash drawer and fresh towels for your tanners,” she continues. “It’s always smart to keep extra bed disinfectant on-hand!” ■



About the Author:

Tanning industry veteran Brenda Fishbaugh is president of Eye Pro, Inc., makers of disposable eyewear. She travels extensively training

salons on the effects of UV light on vision.

