

# MCLB ALBANY SAFETYGRAM

## NATIONAL HAND WASHING AWARENESS WEEK (1-7 DECEMBER 2013)

### Improving Health & Increasing Productivity

Hand washing is an easy, inexpensive, and effective way to prevent the spread of germs and keep employees healthy. Hand washing gives people the opportunity to take an active role in their own health. Most hand washing studies have focused on child care or health care settings. The few that have looked at corporate settings show that promoting clean hands results in fewer employee sick days.

#### Saving Time and Money

Hand washing is one of the best ways to avoid getting sick and spreading illness to others. Sick employees are less productive even when they come to work and may spread illness to others. One recent study promoting clean hands in corporate environments showed:

- Fewer employee illnesses
- Less use of sick days

#### Helping Families and Workforces Thrive

Employees with healthy children spend less time away from work, are more productive, and get sick less often. Employers should promote hand washing and encourage employees to:

- Teach their children good hand washing techniques
- Remind children to wash their hands
- Wash hands after sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose
- Wash hands before and after handling food
- Wash hands after shaking someone else's hand

*Despite widespread knowledge of the importance of hand washing, there is still room for improvement. A recent study showed that only 31% of men and 65% of women washed their hands after using a public restroom.*



#### What is the right way to wash your hands?

- Wet your hands with clean running water (warm or cold) and apply soap.
- Rub your hands together to make lather and scrub them well; be sure to scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- Continue rubbing your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
- Rinse your hands well under running water.
- Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry.

For more information on hand washing, please visit CDC's [Hand washing website](#). You can also call 1-800-CDC-INFO or [Contact CDC-INFO](#) for answers to specific questions.



**Risk Management 639-5249**  
**Prepared by Donna Chalmers**

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