

Standard Practices for Use of Splash Guards in Clinical Areas

1. What is a “splash zone” and why is it important?

A splash zone is the area surrounding a sink where objects placed within that area, such as clean supplies or medications, can become contaminated from splashing associated with handwashing or other activities being performed in the sink. These splashes of water can contain a variety of microorganisms that cause patient infections when supplies or medications become contaminated. We usually consider splash zones to include the area within 3 feet of the sink.

2. What is a splash guard?

A splash guard is a barrier installed around the perimeter of a sink to prevent water from contaminating nearby surfaces and supplies.

The most important way to prevent sink splashes from contaminating patient care supplies or medications is to store all clean supplies and to perform all medication preparation outside of the splash zone (i.e., > 3 feet away from sinks). If this is not possible because of limited counterspace, a splash guard can be installed to prevent contamination of the area around the sink.

3. What areas should be considered for splash guard installation?

Consider installing splash guards around sinks adjacent to areas designated for medication preparation or when it is not feasible to store supplies outside of the splash zone.

4. How do I submit a request for a splash guard to be installed in the clinical area?

The unit or area should submit a ticket to Facilities through [MCSS](#).

5. What kind of splash guards should be considered?

Install clear plexiglass splash guards in clinical settings because they are sturdy, transparent, and simple to clean and disinfect. This type allows users to spot any residue buildup easily or any cracks and ensures timely replacement if compromised.

6. What is the recommended height and width for splash guards in acute care hospitals?

If you are using a splash guard, ensure that the splash guard is tall and wide enough to prevent water from splashing onto any areas used for medication preparation or storage of clean supplies.

Recommendations include:

- Height for a splash guard ranges from **18 to 36 inches**.
- Width for a splash guard ranges from **24 inches to 48 inches**.

7. How do I determine the appropriate height and width for splash guards?

To determine the appropriate dimensions, consider the following:

- **Dimensions:** Ensure the splash guard height and width are suitable for the sink area. Take into consideration the location of overhead cabinets, paper towel dispensers, and hand hygiene products.

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- **Material:** Choose durable, easy-to-clean materials.
- **Positioning:** Ensure the guard is positioned correctly to prevent splashes.
- **Feedback:** Consult the unit manager for input around appropriate dimensions.

8. How should splash guards be cleaned and maintained?

Hospitality staff will clean splash guards daily with a hospital-approved disinfectant and ensure that the sink basin, faucet, faucet handles, surrounding countertops, and surfaces around the drain are cleaned and disinfected daily.

9. Are there any limitations to using splash guards?

For any activities performed in and around sinks that require the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), wear appropriate PPE, regardless of the presence of a splash guard.

10. What other factors should be considered?

- Install paper towel dispensers outside of the splash zone or, if a splash guard is in place, beyond the splash guard.
- Ensure paper towels do not touch the countertop.
- Provide easy access to hand hygiene supplies.



The example in the picture above illustrates the recommended clear plexiglass splash guard