

Setting Up the Clean-Dirty Line

Overview



During an animal health emergency, vehicles, equipment, or people entering and exiting the farm can transfer disease organisms. Designating clean and dirty areas on response sites helps to reduce disease transmission onto or off of a site. This handout discusses principles for setting up and crossing the clean-dirty line during a response.

Terminology

- The **dirty side** (Hot Zone) is potentially contaminated with pathogens and contains sick (or exposed) animals.
- The **clean side** (Cold Zone) is noncontaminated) does not contain sick animals.
- The **clean-dirty line** separates the two areas.

Some responders will work on the dirty side performing tasks such as sampling, depopulation, disposal, and disinfection. Others will work on the clean side providing planning and support.



- Entry and exit for the response site **always** occurs at the clean-dirty line.
- Those entering the site will don (put on) PPE on the clean side.
- Anything leaving the dirty side must be disinfected at the clean-dirty line.

Arrival at the Farm

Upon arrival, park on the clean side. Ideally, there will be a clearly marked, designated parking area. Never drive directly into animal areas.

- **Don (put on) required personal protective equipment (PPE).**
 - Level C PPE is used for most animal health emergencies. This includes tear-resistant or chemical-resistant coveralls, rubber boots, disposable boot covers, gloves, a face mask or respirator, and goggles.
- **Identify and mark a location for the clean-dirty line.**
 - This should be an area located away from the infected animals or their housing, usually near the farm entrance. The area must be large enough to accommodate items going in and out of the site (e.g., people or vehicles).
 - The area used should be flat or sloping toward the farm to keep any runoff (e.g. disinfectant solutions) on the site. It should also be located away from any waterways.
 - A clean, paved area is preferred and should be sprayed with disinfectant solution before setting up the clean-dirty line. Well-drained gravel is acceptable; a tarp should be used to create a barrier and prevent mud during clean up.
 - The clean-dirty line should be clearly visible and marked with tarps, paint, tape, or rope. Use of a physical barrier, such as a gate is best.

Clean-Dirty Line Setup

The setup of the clean-dirty line should provide easy access to items needed for decontamination and disposal upon exit.

- **Place these items (at minimum) at the clean-dirty line:**
 - A footbath (a plastic container filled with disinfectant and a scrub brush) for footwear disinfection.
 - A garden sprayer filled with disinfectant for PPE and supply disinfection when exiting.
 - Several garbage bags (at least two) to discard disposable items or contain reusable items (e.g., respirators).
 - Two plastic buckets lined with garbage bags for a secondary level of containment of items upon departure.
 - A hand sprayer filled with disinfectant



Example clean-dirty line setup. Photo from NSW Dept. of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Entering at the Clean-Dirty Line

- Gather any items needed for assigned duties. Pre-label any sampling supplies.
- Don't forget to bring extra gloves, masks, and duct tape to repair any PPE rips or tears.
- Place all items in waterproof plastic bags to allow for disinfection upon exit.
- If a cell phone is needed, it should also be placed in a waterproof plastic bag.

Exiting at the Clean-Dirty Line

- **All items taken on site, including PPE worn, must be disinfected or disposed of on the dirty side before exiting.**
- Thoroughly scrub, clean and disinfect footwear, including the treads, in the footbath.
- Spray all surfaces of the PPE and other items taken onsite (i.e., supplies or samples in waterproof plastic bags) with the disinfectant-filled garden sprayer.
- Remove PPE, placing disposable items (e.g., duct tape, masks, protective suit) in one garbage bag, and reusable items (e.g., respirators, goggles) in another.
- Seal the garbage bags and spray the entire outer surface of each bag with disinfectant.
- Disinfect boot surfaces again and step onto the clean side.
- Place each disposal bag into a second garbage bag (i.e., lined plastic buckets). Seal and disinfect the outer surface and place on the clean side of the line.
- Note: for vehicle exiting, wastewater from the disinfection process will need to be captured.

Information on donning and doffing Level C PPE and setting up a vehicle clean-dirty area can be found on the [Just-In-Time website](#).



Additional [Just-In-Time training materials](#) can be found on the CFSPH website.

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