

Maintaining strong safety, quality and performance standards at the heart of the newly launched Accord Hand Sanitiser Industry Benchmark

The manufacturers and suppliers of hygiene and personal care products within Accord and the mainstream industry in Australia have an abiding commitment to quality and safety.

Throughout the many challenging months of the COVID-19 pandemic, our industry's products have been vital in providing clean, hygienic environments needed to help stop the spread of the virus. Key amongst these are hand hygiene products, including soaps, liquid handwash and leave-on hand sanitisers. Use of these products, especially hand sanitisers, is now at an all-time high. And this led to entry into the market of many new firms, including non-traditional suppliers like gin and spirit distilleries.

Early in the pandemic, Accord released an industry guide "*Information Sheet – Alcohol-based Hand Sanitiser Manufacturing and Transport*" to help new firms better understand important regulatory requirements and operational procedures needed for safe manufacturing and transport of flammable hand sanitisersⁱ.

Since then, attention has shifted to potential concerns related to the increased consumer use of hand sanitisers. Foremost of these being safe product use, particularly for young children. This includes appropriate packaging for these products, so they are not confused with beverage or food containers. Additional to avoiding risks of accidental ingestion is the need for hand sanitisers to perform their intended function by effectively sanitising hands.

For these reasons Accord has now published a comprehensive "**Hand Sanitiser Industry Benchmark for non-therapeutic products**" providing detailed safety, performance and quality standards for hand sanitisers used by consumers and in various workplaces and industriesⁱⁱ. Specified in this Industry Benchmark are requirements for the quality of hand sanitiser ingredients, guidance on product performance (efficacy), safety, record keeping and quality assurance considerations, and guidance on packaging type, product claims and labelling.

The Industry Benchmark is being distributed widely and members of the mainstream hygiene products industry represented by Accord are committed to meeting its product standards.

Accord also notes the recent findings of a survey conducted by CHOICE looking at the alcohol content of hand sanitisers sold to Australian consumers. Pleasingly, all 29 tested products passed tests administered by the National Measurement Institute by containing greater than 60% alcohol. This 100% pass rate reinforces the existing high-quality standards the hygiene industry maintains for its products. The CHOICE survey can be found at: <https://www.choice.com.au/health-and-body/beauty-and-personal-care/skin-care-and-cosmetics/articles/hand-sanitiser-alcohol-content-test>.

The Industry Benchmark can be found at: <https://accord.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Hand-Sanitiser-Industry-Benchmark-September-2020.pdf>.

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ⁱ The Information Sheet was published in April 2020 and can be found at: <https://accord.asn.au/useful-links/alcohol-based-hand-sanitiser-manufacturing-and-transport-information-sheet/>

ⁱⁱ The Industry Benchmark does not apply to any of the following hand sanitisers:

1. Products that are 'therapeutic goods'
2. Products that are 'excluded goods' complying with the exclusion parameters set out in the Therapeutic Goods (Excluded Goods – Hand Sanitiser) Determination 2020 (EGD 2020), or
3. Rinse-off products i.e. requires rinsing with water after the product is applied.