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DAN Encourages Divers and Dive Operators to Disinfect Gear Properly

DURHAM, NC – March 11, 2020 – In light of the recent outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), questions have arisen in the dive community about disease transmission when using rental equipment, especially regulators. With the threat of coronavirus on everyone's minds, divers want to know what precautions are being taken against the spread of disease. Properly sanitizing equipment is paramount. Keep the following in mind:

According to the CDC, household cleaners are as effective against COVID-19 as they are against the common cold and flu viruses. Therefore, cleaning and disinfecting equipment meant for personal use (such as second-stage regulators, masks, snorkels and BCD oral inflators) is very important.

Equipment can be effectively sanitized by submerging it in a 10% bleach solution or using a cleaning product such as Steramine™ tablets or any other quaternary ammonium compound. Be sure to use these products according to the manufacturer's directions and then rinse the equipment with fresh water.

Products that are commonly used to clean dive gear but are ineffective against coronavirus include antibacterial and chlorhexidine mouthwashes or sprays. Hot soapy water must be paired with mechanical action such as scrubbing with a soft toothbrush to be effective.

If you're a diver using rental gear and would like to take extra steps to protect yourself from transmissible diseases, thoroughly wipe the following equipment with a household disinfecting wipe and then rinse with fresh water before use:

- Regulator mouthpiece
- Snorkel
- BCD oral inflator
- The inside of your mask

If you do not have access to wipes, you may wish to ask the shop you're diving with to properly sanitize the equipment before you take it with you.

For a list of household cleaning products effective against the coronavirus, see the American Chemistry Council Center for Biocide Chemistries' [list of products](#) that have an "emerging viral pathogen claim" from the Environmental Protection Agency. When using a household cleaning product, it might be prudent to change the active ingredient every so often to avoid breeding resistant strains.