

Veterinary Facility Cleanliness and Orderliness

Course 101

Module 1

Press space bar to continue

first Impressions



- **Keep your clinic clean and neat**
- **Make a good first impression**
- **Avoid unpleasant odors**

Press space bar to continue

Keeping the clinic clean and neat in appearance is a big responsibility and a very important part of working in a clinic. One of the first impressions a client has of your place of business is cleanliness and the odor or lack of. If the clinic has an unpleasant odor, the client is going to have the impression that you do not clean daily. They are not going to understand that an animal that just left expressed its anal sacs all over the room, they just know that they do not want their precious animal in an unclean environment.

Clients Observe and Smell



- Adequate ventilation helps with odors
- AC ducts and ceiling fans are often forgotten areas
- Have daily and weekly cleaning tasks

Press space bar to continue

The clinic needs to have adequate ventilation to help with this problem. Even if there is no unpleasant odor, clients notice the hair that seems to be attracted to every area of the clinic. Ceiling fans and air conditioning ducts are areas that are sometimes forgotten. It is helpful to have daily and weekly checklists of cleaning tasks. As a task is completed, the person initials it. This aids in the entire job being completed.

Front Desk and Waiting Area



- **Keep front desk free of clutter**
- **Keep files alphabetized and easily accessible**
- **Keep the floor swept and clean**

Press space bar to continue

Front Desk and Waiting Area

This is the area clients notice first. Make sure paperwork, files, etc. are stacked neatly and that it does not appear that you will not be able to find anything. This is for appearance and also for function. Clients are not impressed when you cannot find their file. Make sure that files are alphabetized correctly and filed in a timely manner. The floor should be swept regularly and anything left by the previous patient, such as urine or feces, should be cleaned immediately.

Exam Rooms



- Exam rooms should be cleaned after every client
- Clean with chemicals that kill bacteria and viruses
- Wipe away any chemical residues
- Empty the garbage on a regular basis
- Clean scales after each patient
- Always wash your hands after each patient

Press space bar to continue

Exam Rooms

Every exam room including the table, floor, countertop, etc. needs to be cleaned after each client. If there is hair, toenails, urine, or other waste anywhere in the room, the owner is going to notice it. You should be cleaning the exam table with a chemical that is effective against bacteria and viruses. Due to constantly mutating microorganisms, the best defense is to wipe the table with a bleach water mixture and then a gluteraldehyde chemical or something similar. Make sure you wipe the table down so that there are no chemical puddles left. Some of the chemicals you will use for cleaning could burn the paw pads of the next patient. The table needs to be completely dry. Always wear gloves when you are cleaning with cleansers and disinfectants. Also, always use the recommended dilution for chemicals and never mix disinfectants. Make sure the garbage is emptied in a timely manner, especially if paper towels used for anal sac expression are in the can. This odor permeates everything. The scales used for weighing the patients should be cleaned after each patient. You never know why the previous patient was visiting. It may have carried parasites, bacteria, or a viral infection that could be transmitted by indirect contact. You definitely do not want a patient to get sick because of something it was exposed to while in your clinic. When this happens, it is called a "nosocomial infection." Make sure you wash your hands with a good antiseptic soap after restraining patients for the same reason.

Treatment Area



- **Treatment area should be cleaned frequently**
- **The area where hospitalized patients are kept**
- **Follow all directions for cleaning products and use the proper dilution**

Press space bar to continue

The treatment area should be cleaned frequently. Many patients seen in this area are there because they are ill. This is typically the area where hospitalized patients are being kept. When an animal is ill, its immune system is lowered. This means that it is more susceptible to other infections that it normally would be able to fight off. Before using a product, make sure you read the label and follow the instructions. Many disinfectants are supposed to be diluted. If you are not using it at the proper strength, it could be harmful to you and your patients' safety.

Parking Lot & Backyard



- **Keep parking area clean from debris and feces**
- **Dog walking areas should be clean of feces**

Press space bar to continue

The parking lot is an area that many times is forgotten. Someone should pick up all trash and any feces left by previous patients daily. Wherever the dogs are walked, the feces should be picked up daily, if not more often. This helps cut down the risk of a disease spreading and also keeps the dogs cleaner.

Isolation



- **This is where animals with highly contagious diseases are held**
- **Keep a tub of bleach water at the door to clean off the bottoms of your shoes**
- **Have a separate set of feeding bowls, trash cans, cleaning tools, etc. for this area**
- **Thoroughly clean this area once a week if no patient is being kept here**
- **Double bag all trash that is removed from this area**

Press space bar to continue

An isolation ward must be cleaned often. It is typically the area where animals diagnosed or suspected of having a highly contagious disease such as feline leukemia or parvo are housed. If a hospitalized animal is shedding a virus, such as parvo, you must clean frequently. As the animal is recovering, it does not need to ingest the virus again. It is a good idea to have a shallow tub of bleach water by the exit door so that you can step into it just to kill any body waste on the bottom of your shoes. Be careful not to track a virus across the floor of the clinic. You should have feeding bowls, trash cans, cleaning tools, etc. that stay in isolation. It is best not to mix these items with items used daily for boarders. Make sure this room is cleaned weekly if there has not been any patient being kept in there. Wash the walls, cages, under and behind the cages, cabinet doors, trash cans, and entrance/exit door with bleach water and then with a glutaraldehyde chemical. Bleach water is effective against some microorganisms, but not all. The same is true for glutaraldehyde; thus, it is smart to use a combination. You should always wipe dry between the use of different chemicals. Some combinations could produce a toxic inhalant. Also, when emptying the trash from isolation, double bag it. Once you have finished cleaning isolation, whether a patient is currently being hospitalized in there or not, wash your hands thoroughly before touching anything in the clinic, especially other patients

Kennel



- **Keeping the kennel clean is a constant battle**
- **Clean the floor, walls, ceiling and door on a cage**
- **Make sure that the cage is completely dry before you put an animal into it**
- **Newspaper is a good liner**
- **Try to use cage cards and name tags**

Press space bar to continue

Cleaning of the kennel is a constant battle; unless you do not have animals staying in the kennel area, it will never be completely clean. Your boarders are going to consistently need their cages and runs cleaned. Hair will be everywhere and many of your patients think it is fun to knock their water bowls over, just so that they can watch you clean their cage or run for the fifth time in an hour. Use a bleach water solution or a glutaraldehyde. When cleaning a cage, it is not sufficient to just wipe down the floor of the cage. Clean the floor, walls, ceiling, door, etc. If you use bleach water to clean the cage, make sure the cage is completely dry before putting an animal into it. If you are using it in a run that has a drain, rinse it several times. Bleach will burn through the paw pads and you do not want to have to explain to the owner why their pet needs ointment put on its feet. The best choice for lining cages to help absorb water or urine is newspaper. You need to be careful if putting a white animal on it though. When the newspaper gets wet, the ink can come off and you do not want a champion Maltese being presented to the owner with newspaper ink all over it. Use a clean blanket or towel with the very light-colored animals. If your clinic uses cage cards, make sure that the card gets transferred with the animal if you must move it to a different cage. An unhappy client is one that comes to pick up their animal and the wrong one gets brought to them. It is a good idea to use a combination of cage cards along with a name tag that goes around the neck. Also, when moving animals from cage to cage, make sure the new cage is thoroughly cleaned first. As discussed earlier, it does not make a good impression when a pet becomes ill while boarding in your facility. You definitely do not want that champion Maltese mentioned earlier going into a cage where there was a pet with sarcoptic mange not 10 minutes before.