

Key Safety Message: Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitizer Vapor is Flammable

Precautions should be taken when using and storing alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Because the vapors from alcohol-based hand sanitizers can become flammable, proper storage is essential to staying safe.

Weather Forecast for 5/20/20: Mostly sunny with temperatures that vary from the low 60s to low 70s across the Eversource service territory.

Proper Storage is Key to Avoiding Hand Sanitizer Fires

One of the seven simple steps you can take to protect yourself from the COVID-19 coronavirus is frequently washing your hands. While hand washing is still the best practice, having hand sanitizer readily available is a great alternative.

The most effective type of hand sanitizer has an alcohol base. Vapors from alcohol-based sanitizers with a 60% or greater amount of alcohol, however, have a flash point at approximately 65 degrees Fahrenheit. As we approach the warmer months in New England, vehicle temperatures can quickly reach the flashpoint for this product.

Experts advise against leaving alcohol-based hand sanitizer in your car for long periods of time because it reduces its effectiveness and could be a fire risk. If you store alcohol-based hand sanitizer for long periods of time with extended exposure to high temperatures, the alcohol in the hand sanitizer will eventually evaporate, causing it to be useless.

On April 26, 2020, at 12:41 p.m., an employee parked and locked his company vehicle. After approximately 30 minutes, the employee noticed the glass in the vehicle door had changed in appearance. As he approached the driver's side door, he determined there had been a fire inside the driver's door – in the same place where a container of alcohol-based hand sanitizer was stored. Although 911 was called, the fire had extinguished itself due to lack of oxygen.

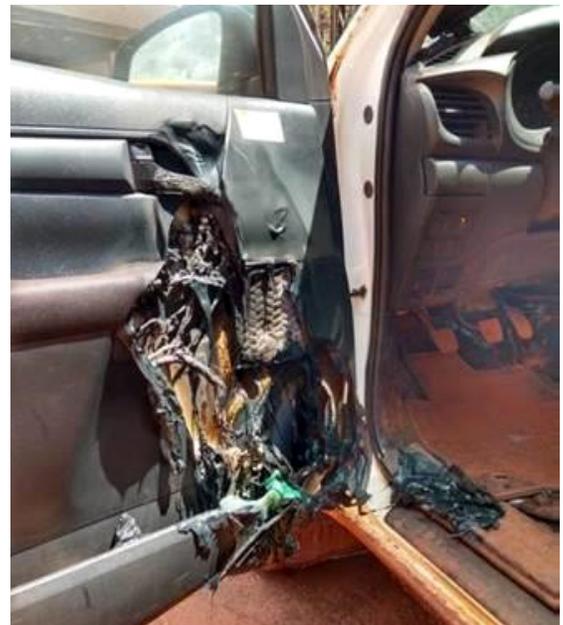


Image and story from an industry safety briefing (Quanta Services).

REMINDER: If you are not feeling well or a member of your household is sick, call your supervisor. After you've called your supervisor, call HRConnect at **800-841-8684**.

Thank you for your commitment to Safety First and Always

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