

1 Problem

What When Problem(s)
Date
Different, unusual, unique

Where Facility, site
Unit, area, equipment
Task being performed

Virus can contaminate surfaces quickly
Study published September 8, 2014
Ongoing issue, new study findings published
Office buildings, hotels, and healthcare facilities
Common surfaces such as doorknobs/ table tops
Studying how viruses spread

Impact to the Goals

Patient Safety	Potential spread of disease
Employee Safety	Potential spread of disease
Environmental	N/A
Compliance	N/A
Schedule/ Operations	Potential loss of productivity
Property/ Equipment	N/A
Labor/ Time	Potential to miss work

PREVENTING ILLNESS

Cause Map

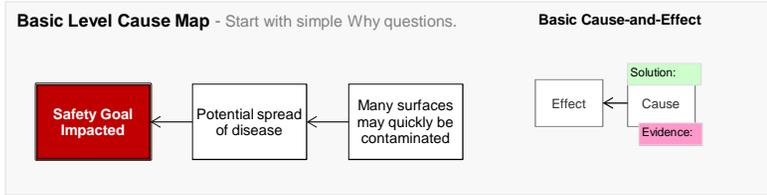
The Hand is Quicker Than the Sneeze

A new study, simply titled "How Quickly Viruses Can Contaminate Buildings and How to Stop Them", found that a single source of contamination can spread to 40 to 60 percent of people and commonly touched objects within 2 to 4 hours. To conduct the study, researchers contaminated a variety of surfaces in several different buildings with a benign virus that lives and multiplies within bacteria to use as a tracer. After some time had passed, researchers sampled surfaces that can harbor infectious organisms, such as light switches and faucet handles, to see how far the planted virus had spread.

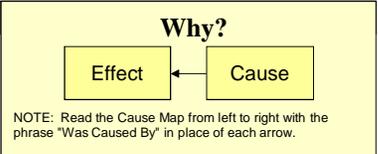
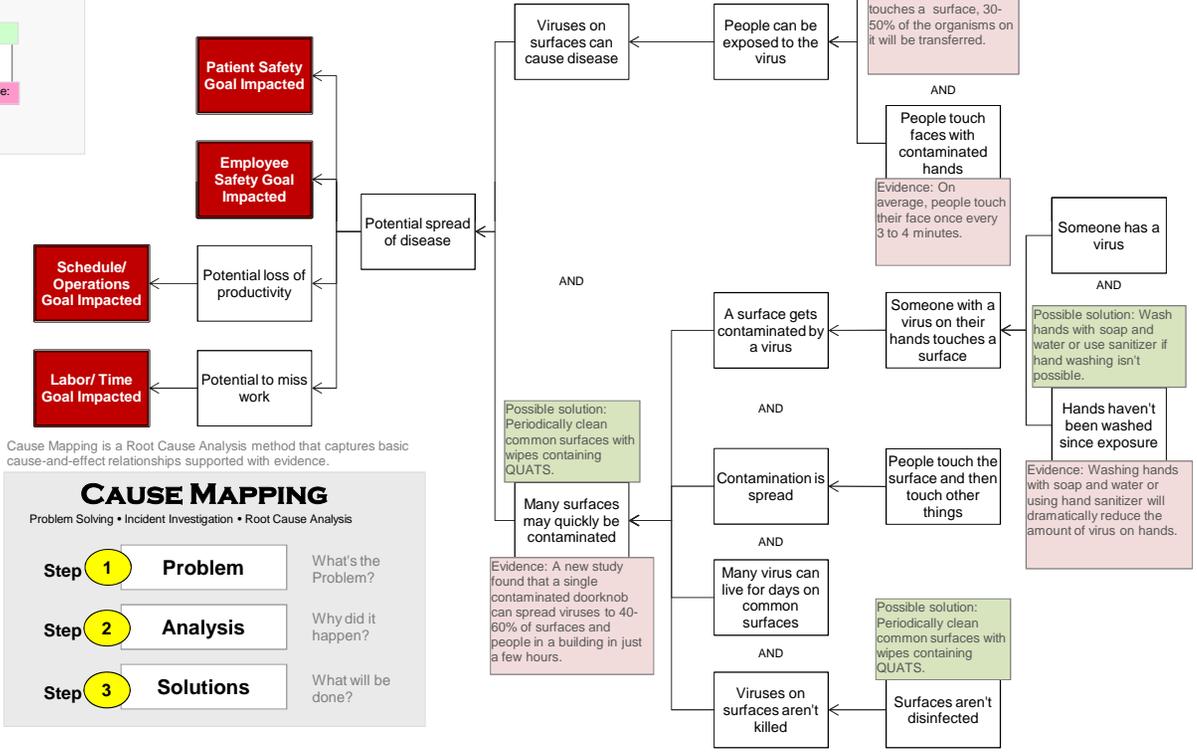
"What we really learned was the hand is quicker than the sneeze in the spread of disease"

-Charles Gerba, University of Arizona researcher

2 Analysis



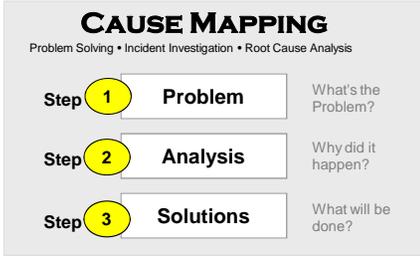
More Detailed Cause Map - Add detail as information becomes available.



3 Solutions

The final step in the Cause Mapping process is to determine potential solutions that could be implemented to reduce the risk of the problem recurring. The recommended solutions that can be used to limit the spread of disease are relatively cheap and easy. Washing hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer is still the best way to reduce the spread of infectious organisms. This study also showed that the use of wipes containing quaternary ammonium compounds (QUATS) just once a day can prevent the spread of illness. For most circumstances, neither of these practices should be cost nor time prohibitive.

Cause Mapping is a Root Cause Analysis method that captures basic cause-and-effect relationships supported with evidence.



For a free copy of our Root Cause Analysis Template in Microsoft Excel, used to create this page, visit our web site.

