

GUIDELINES FOR CLEANING AND HYGIENE IN SCHOOL FACILITIES



basic education
Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoH	Department of Health
DSD	Department of Social Development
NDoH	National Department of Health
NICD	National Institute for Communicable Diseases
NSNP	National School Nutrition Programme
OHSA	Occupational Health and Safety Act
PED(s)	Provincial Education Department(s)
SMT(s)	School Management Team(s)
WHO	World Health Organization

Bioburden: The number of bacteria living on an unhygienic surface.

Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) Programme:

The CSTL Programme is a DBE organising framework for programmes intended to prevent and mitigate factors that have a negative impact on the enrolment, retention, performance and progression of vulnerable learners in schools by addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

Cleaning: The mechanical removal of foreign material (e.g., soil, and organic material) from objects and surfaces. Cleaning is normally accomplished by using water with detergents following the mechanical removal of particulate matter.

Disinfectants: Chemical compounds that inactivate (i.e. kill) pathogens and other microbes. ***Disinfectants are applied only to inanimate objects.*** All organic material and soil must be removed by a cleaning product before application of disinfectants. Some products combine a cleaner with a disinfectant.

Disinfection: A thermal or chemical process for inactivating micro-organisms on inanimate objects.

Health: The World Health Organization defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmy.

Hygiene: The conditions and practices that help to maintain health and prevent the spread of diseases. This encompasses *Personal, Home and Everyday Hygiene and include the following:* handwashing, respiratory hygiene/Cough Etiquette, Food hygiene (from farm to fork), hygiene in the kitchen and bathroom, laundry hygiene, etc.

WASH: **W**ater, **S**anitation and **H**ygiene (Programmes)

PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES

Education has the power to transform the lives of children and young people, and the world around them. However inclusive and transformative education cannot be delivered if schools are not healthy, safe and caring spaces. In addition, healthy, well-nourished, happy children and adolescents learn better and are more likely to lead healthy, fulfilling and long lives.

Hygiene interventions play an important role in promoting health and preventing the spread diseases. School health and hygiene programmes can develop the necessary knowledge and life-long habits for a healthy lifestyle.

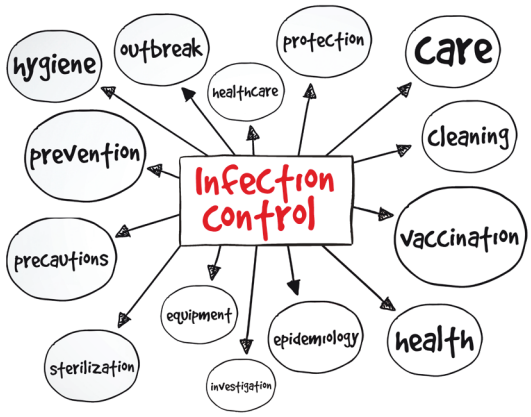
These guidelines provide recommendations on hygiene measures to be implemented in the school environment. The guidelines are in line with the Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993, which authorises measures and practices for the protection of all persons, including employees, from hazards to health and safety arising from the workplace and activities therein.

Importantly, these hygiene practices should continue outside of the school in households, in areas of congregation within the school and in learner transport in order to keep the school community safe. Schools, working together with local health authorities and municipalities, can help ensure learners and educators have a safe and healthy learning and working environment. These hygiene practices should be used as a minimum standard of precautions to prevent pathogen transmission.

This is the first version of the Guidelines for Cleaning and Hygiene in Schools. It is anticipated that they will be updated periodically. As such, comments and suggestions are welcome and should be sent to Dr F. Kumalo, Sector COVID -19 Response Lead and Health Risk Specialist at 012 357 3431/29 or email Kumalo.F@dbe.gov.za

A. STANDARD PRECAUTIONS OF INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL

A safe environment can be achieved through elimination of infectious particles in the air and on surfaces by **always adhering to the following Golden Rules:**



a) **Environmental cleaning and disinfection** - Reduce the risk of micro-organisms in the environment by cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces regularly (such as door handles, hand rails, desks, tables, windows, etc.) including equipment used within the school, such as laboratory apparatus and sports equipment.

b) **Hand hygiene** – Wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after using the toilet, prior to, and after touching food and if hands are visibly soiled/dirty. If safe water and soap is not available, an alcohol-based hand sanitiser with at least 70% alcohol content, can be utilized. Primary school learners should be encouraged to wash hands after any breaks as they may have played and touched surfaces that make their hands dirty.

c) **Avoid touching** the eyes, mouth or nose with unwashed/un-sanitised hands.

d) **Avoid direct contact with persons who are sick** – Encourage learners and staff to stay at home and seek medical attention when feeling sick.

e) Limit airborne transmission – **Allow adequate cross ventilation** in classrooms and office buildings.

f) **Practice cough and sneeze etiquette** – Cough into the fold of the bent elbow and sneeze in a tissue which should then be discarded safely in a refuse bin with a lid. Wash hands immediately after coughing or sneezing.

g) Encourage parents/ caregivers/ guardians to ensure that their **children are fully immunised** to prevent childhood diseases. Vaccines are safe and effective.

h) In the instance that a learner or staff member becomes ill or is injured at school, anyone who is assisting them must wear disposable gloves while touching blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, mucous membranes and non-intact skin. Such used gloves should be discarded safely in a bin with a lid.

B. RISK REDUCTION METHODS FOR SCHOOLS, CLASSROOMS AND OFFICES

a) Classrooms must be well ventilated. Open doors and windows.

b) Classrooms must be cleaned daily.

c) Each classroom and office must have a litter bin with a lid and lined with a bin liner (or at least a refuse bag), in which all tissues, paper towels and possible contaminated waste must be discarded. The litter bin and refuse bag must be cleared daily, or more frequently if full.

d) Use paper towels to dry hands or wipe surfaces, which must be used once only (single use)

and then discarded. Used paper towels must be discarded safely in the litter bin with a lid.

e) Where possible, a portable hand washing station can be placed near the classroom or office for handwashing. Avoid using common bowls – use tippy taps instead. A hand sanitiser with at least 70 percent alcohol base can be used instead. The product should be applied to all areas of the hands and rubbed-in until it dries.

f) Frequent hand hygiene must form part of the routine of everyday life in a school or office, as well as outside the school, including at home.

C. RISK REDUCTION METHODS FOR TOILETS/BATHROOMS

Each toilet/bathroom must have the following:

a) A hand washing station and hand washing soap within 5 meters of the toilet for hand washing.

b) Adequate quantities of paper towels to dry hands. Alternatively, hands can be air-dried. Used paper towels must be discarded safely in the litter bin with a lid and a bin liner. Do not use a common hand towel or share one.

c) A litter bin with a lid, lined with a bin liner in which all tissues, paper towels and possible contaminated waste must be safely discarded.

d) Toilets designated for females (girls and women) should have additional bins with lids and bin liners to dispose of sanitary towels safely. Learners should be taught and encouraged to dispose of sanitary towels in these bins.

e) Daily cleaning of all surfaces at least once each day, with a disinfectant cleaner/detergent.

f) A cleaning roster and/or checklist for each day must be available and affixed behind the door of the toilets/bathroom, and be updated regularly throughout the day. The roster/checklist must be filed at the end of each day.

D. GENERAL CLEANING AND DISINFECTION



Routine environmental cleaning is an essential part of disinfection. Organic matter can inactivate many disinfectants. Physical cleaning must therefore precede the use of disinfectants. Cleaning reduces the soil load, allowing the disinfectant to work. Removal of germs requires thorough cleaning followed by disinfection.

<u>Cleaning of minimally touched surfaces</u>

Minimally touched surfaces such as floors, walls, ceilings, blinds, etc. should be thoroughly cleaned as follows:

- Detergent solution and or wipes should be used as per manufacturer's instructions;
- Damp mopping is preferable to dry mopping;

- Walls and blinds should be cleaned when visibly dusty or soiled;
- Window curtains should be regularly changed in addition to being cleaned when soiled; and
- Sinks and basins should be cleaned on a regular basis.

a) Cleaning and disinfection of high touch surfaces

Frequently touched surfaces are a high-risk for cross-transmission by pathogens that are transferred from people's hands. Items such as door handles, light switches, lift buttons, working surfaces, tables, railings, laboratory and sports equipment etc. are frequently touched in public places (shopping malls, public amenities, airports and other public places where people gather in numbers).

- High touch areas in public places should be cleaned and disinfected regularly and daily;
- Clean general surfaces and fittings when visibly soiled immediately;
- Routine cleaning and disinfection of high touch surfaces should be done with clean water and a neutral detergent. Detergents usually have no killing ability but do remove organic matter which contains microbes and thereby reduce environmental contamination;
- Detergent solution must be used as per manufacturer's instructions. The exact choice of detergent may be determined by the nature of surface and the likely degree of contamination; and
- Detergent wipes may be used but should not be used as a replacement for the mechanical cleaning process.

Surfaces should be thoroughly cleaned before applying disinfectants to further reduce bioburden.

b) Application of spray disinfectants

Air spraying of outdoor environments is discouraged as it is ineffective and harmful to the environment, humans and animals. Air-spraying must only be done for pest control purposes by a certified, professional pest controller. Avoid spraying disinfectants near water sources, plants and other vegetation. **Under no circumstances should human beings be sprayed with a disinfectant. Under no circumstances should human beings swallow a disinfectant or harmful substance.**

E. GENERAL CLEANING PROCEDURES

1. Perform hand hygiene before putting on and after removing cleaning gloves.
2. Use heavy duty gloves. Elbow-long gloves are recommended. Gloves should be used as per the manufacturer instructions. Torn or chipped gloves should be disposed of, immediately and safely.
3. Do not use alcohol-based disinfectants on plastic gloves as the disinfectant may erode the material thus increasing the risk of exposure to contaminants.

4. Eye protection may be worn, such as goggles or visors.

5. Clean with water and disinfectant. **Follow the instructions on the label** to ensure the safe and effective use of the product.

6. Gloves (if disposable), masks and other waste generated during cleaning should be placed into a waste bin with a lid and disposed of safely.

F. DAILY DUTIES OF CLEANERS

1. Clean all surfaces e.g. floors, bathrooms at least daily with a detergent.
2. Surfaces that are frequently touched, e.g. taps, doorknobs, reception desks must be cleaned regularly.
3. Collect all the bags with possible contaminated waste from classrooms and offices and dispose of safely.
4. Complete the daily cleaning rosters and checklists which should be signed-off daily, and filed safely.

G. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS AND USE OF DISINFECTANTS

- Alcohol solutions with at least 70 percent alcohol base. Disposable alcohol-based wipes may be used.
- SABS approved detergents and disinfectants.
- Ethyl alcohol (70 percent) to disinfect small areas between use and cleaning cycles.
- Chlorine, hypochlorite (strength: 1000-10,000 ppm).
- Sodium hypochlorite (household bleach) at 0.5% (equivalent to 5000 ppm). Method: mix 5mls or a capful of household bleach with 20-25 litres of water. Mix thoroughly and allow the water to stand for at least 2 hours before use. Always store water in a clean container/bucket with a tightly fitting lid.
- Check the expiry date of all cleaning solutions and disinfectants, and never use expired products. Discard those that have expired safely.

H. HAND HYGIENE PRACTICES

a) <u>When to wash hands</u>

- Wash your hands **after visiting the toilet.**
- Wash your hands **before handling food or eating.**
- Wash your hands **before and after attending to sick children or other family members.**
- Wash your hands **after touching surfaces.**

- Wash your hands **after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.**
- Wash hands **after playing with animals and domestic pets**.
- Wash your hands **after changing nappies.**
- Wash your hands **before, during and after preparing food.**
- Wash your hands **between handling raw and cooked or ready-to-eat food.**
- Wash your hands **before eating.**
- Wash your hands **after using a tissue or handkerchief.**
- Wash your hands **after smoking.**
- Wash your hands **after handling rubbish or working in the garden.**
- Wash your hands **when you get home, arrive at other people's homes, at venues or at work.**

How to wash hands

How to wash your hands with soap and water

1. Wet hands and apply soap
2. Rub palms of hands together
3. Rub in between the fingers, back of hands and wrist
4. Clean underneath the nails
5. Rub hands with soap for 20 seconds (the equivalent of singing 'Happy birthday to you…' twice.)
6. Rinse hands with clean running water
7. Dry with a single use disposable clean paper towel or shake hands in the air to dry

Do not use a cloth or share a paper towel to wipe



I. WASTE DISPOSAL

a) As a general rule, all waste generated in the school must be disposed of according to the municipal bylaws in the jurisdiction within which the school is located, and following the established practices in the school. As far as is possible, the 3R's should be applied, namely *Reduce; ReUse; ReCycle*

b) Waste must be placed in a refuse bin with a tight fitting lid, lined with a bin liner or a garbage plastic bag.

c) Refuse should be taken out when full.

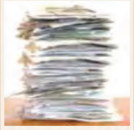
d) The refuse bin and lid must be cleaned every day.

e) Kitchen waste, including food scraps, must be disposed of safely.

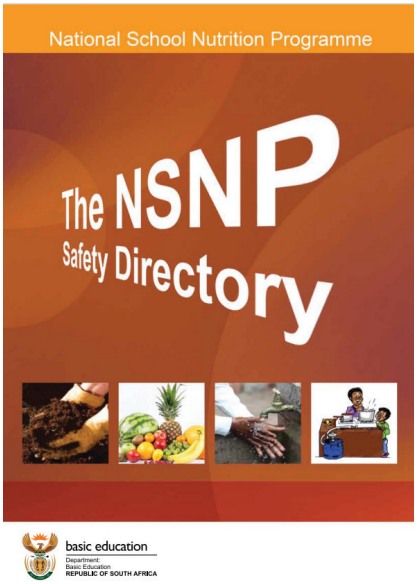
Waste from food preparation is a reality. Schools must therefore be proactive in ensuring that the waste from the NSNP is safely handled and does not harm the environment. As far as is possible, food waste and vegetable scraps, should be recycled through composting. Composting is a natural recycling process where micro-organisms such as bacteria and fungi break down (or decompose) organic matter in plant and animal tissues into simpler substances. These substances are then re-absorbed by plants through the roots.

The table pasted below provides some examples on implementing the Reduce, Reuse and Recycle principle. It is taken from the DBE publication of 2012, the NSNP Safety Directory (available on www.education.gov.za)

The following table indicate waste from the NSNP that can be reduced, re-used and recycled

Types of waste	Food scraps	Beverage/ Food Cans	Paper (magazines, newspapers, office papers)	Glass	Plastic (bags, bottles, containers)
					
Disposal of waste	Compost	Collect-a-can agents	Recycling agents	Recycling agents	Recycling agents
End use of waste	Vegetable gardens	Fund raising for NSNP in schools	Reuse of product and clean environment	Reuse of product and clean environment	Reuse of product and clean environment

REMEMBER THE 3 R'S- REDUCE, RE-USE, RECYCLE !!!



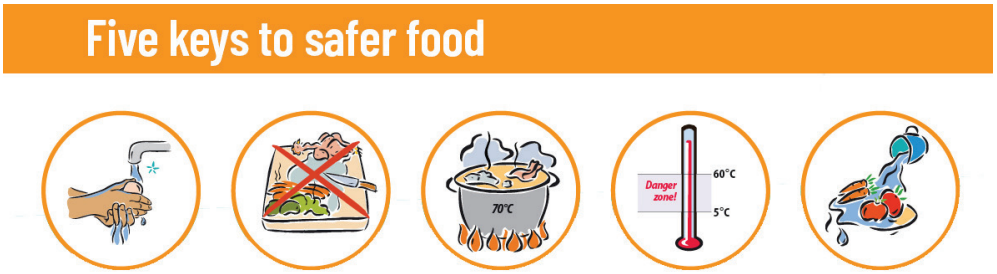
J. ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS WITH THE NATIONAL SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMME

In addition to the general guidelines for schools, food storage and preparation areas for the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) must institute additional hygiene measures to ensure food safety. It is important to prepare food in clean and safe premises, as well as in a clean and safe manner. Maintaining food safety throughout the NSNP value chain, from food production to the plate of the learner, is critical.

Schools must keep the food storage and preparation area/s as well as all cooking equipment and utensils clean, to prevent food poisoning and to ensure that learners are served not only nutritious food, but safe food.

It is highly recommended that schools apply to their local municipality and attain the R638 Certificate, the ***Certificate of Acceptability***, for the food preparation area. The certificate indicates compliance with health regulations and is valid for a period of two years.

The World Health Organization advocates for the following Five Keys to Safer Food: (1) keep clean; (2) separate raw and cooked food; (3) cook food thoroughly; (4) keep food at safe temperatures; and (5) use safe water and raw materials.



The following guidelines must be observed:

a) Sweep and mop kitchen/cooking area floors every day.

b) Maintain good ventilation especially while cooking. Keep doors and windows open.

c) Clean and disinfect cutting boards and countertops daily.

d) Volunteer Food Handlers must wash their hands thoroughly before preparing food.

e) Head gear and aprons (cloth or plastic disposable) must be worn at all times while preparing, cooking and serving food, as well as when washing up.

f) Closed shoes should be worn at all times while preparing, cooking and serving food, as well as when washing up.

g) All surfaces, cooking and eating utensils must be cleaned using hot soapy water and then disinfected, daily.

h) Worktops must be wiped as you work. Practice the “clean as you go principle”.

i) Refuse should be taken out when full, and at the end of each cooking session.

j) Keep the kitchen free from pests such as flies, cockroaches or rats.

k) Learners must wash their hands before eating.

l) Learners should eat their meals in their respective classrooms under the supervision of an educator.

m) Learners must use appropriate eating utensils such as plates, cups and spoons. Under no circumstances should learners share utensils when eating.

Alert: Only registered gas installers must be used for gas installation in schools.

K. GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS WITH A TUCKSHOP OR FOOD VENDORS

It is important that the health, safety and hygiene standards are equally observed in school tuckshops and by food vendors at a school. The school Principal, School Management Team and the School Governing Body (SGB) should play a leading role in ensuring that tuckshop operators and food vendors (inside or outside the school premises) adhere to hygiene measures outlined in this guideline and the relevant municipal Regulations.

The NSNP Guidelines for the Tuckshop Operators (available on the DBE website www.education.gov.za) require the SGB to enter into a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with school tuckshop operators. Such a SLA should include the right to sanction and/ or terminate the services of a non-complying tuckshop operator. It is advised that such SLA includes hygiene practices and the minimum standards to be implemented, in order to prevent the risk of exposure to harmful bacteria and other health hazards (e.g. food poisoning).

The SGBs and SMTs should conduct regular monitoring and “spot-checks”. In consultation with the municipalities’ Environmental Health Officials, training and awareness sessions should be scheduled and undertaken, on an on-going basis.

L. USE OF INFORMATION, EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNICATION MATERIALS

Advocacy material on handwashing must be available and displayed prominently in each classroom, hall, toilet facilities and office building/s.

Important information messages for schools should include the following:

a) Wash hands and sanitise hands frequently;

b) Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth;

c) Cover the mouth and nose with your bent elbow or with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, then dispose of the used tissue safely in a bin with a lid;

d) Do not come to school/work if you are feeling sick or unwell. Rather seek medical attention;

e) Do not share eating utensils with others, including friends;

f) Wash daily - take a shower, bath or bucket-bath every day;

g) Do not share tooth brushes or face cloths with anyone;

h) Wear clean clothes daily; and

i) Vaccines save lives.

M. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM (SMT)

The School Principal and SMT are responsible for the implementation of these guidelines in order to maintain a safe, healthy and conducive school environment for teaching and learning. The Principal and SMT must lead the implementation of the conditions and practices for hygiene in the school.

To this end, the Principal must ensure the following:

1. He/she must identify and appoint a health and hygiene champion for the school.
2. Ensure that the health and hygiene champion receives the necessary training to enable him/her to carry out their responsibilities, including on-going training as relevant.
3. Ensure the availability of the necessary cleaning and hygiene equipment and supplies to implement the cleanliness and hygiene practices correctly.
4. Ensure the availability of relevant and accessible Information Education and Communication (IEC) material, with the correct language, visibility and layout for the learners, staff and school community. The IEC material must be displayed prominently throughout the school.
5. Check the cleaning timetables/rosters and checklists daily, sign them off and file them safely.
6. Report all incidents of food contamination or food poisoning to the local municipality and circuit/district office. Keep the contact details of the nearest Environmental Health Practitioner/s within easy reach for this purpose.
7. Liaise with relevant departments and stakeholders to ensure successful implementation of these guidelines.

APPENDIX 1

BASIC CLEANING AND HYGIENE PACKAGE

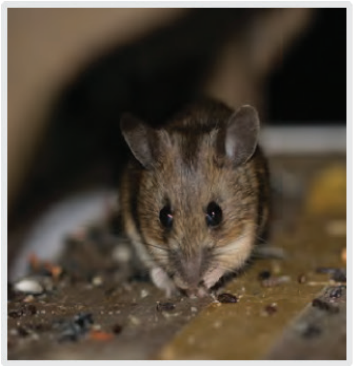
- Hand washing soap (Liquid soap is preferable)
- Refuse bins with fitting lids
- Gloves - Heavy Duty for cleaners, elbow length preferred
- Disposable gloves
- Plastic aprons (disposable)
- Disinfectants
- Paper towels
- Toilet paper
- Plastic or aluminium handle brooms
- Plastic or aluminium handle mops
- Cleaning brushes
- Single and double buckets
- Double wringer trolley mops
- Cleaning cloths
- Bin liners and refuse bags
- Protective Eyewear for cleaners (optional)
- Headwraps, Gloves and Aprons for Food Handlers
- SABS approved fire extinguisher/s for kitchen/cooking area
- First Aid kit for kitchen/cooking area
- First Aid kit for sick bay

APPENDIX 2

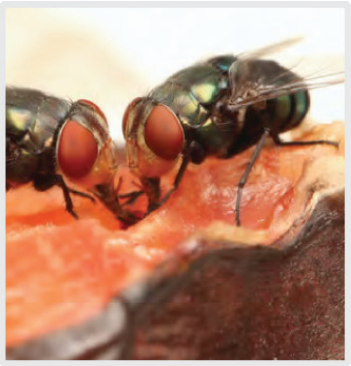
PEST CONTROL

Pests can be a real problem around food. Cockroaches and flies spread bacteria. Rats and mice can cause diseases in humans; they eat through packaging to get to the food product, chew electric wires and can contaminate your food.

Weevils are little insects found in grains, rice and flour. They are not dangerous and will not hurt you if you eat them, but who wants to eat bugs with their rice?







You need to be very careful with poisons used to kill rats and cockroaches. These can poison or even kill humans too. They can also kill domestic animals like dogs, cats and chickens. Store all pesticides in locked cupboards away from food preparation areas and where children cannot find them. Make sure you carefully follow the instructions on how to use any product that kills pests. It is recommeded that schools outsource this activity to certified pest controllers.

APPENDIX 3:

EXAMPLE OF SANITARY CHECK TOOLS FOR CLEANERS AND SUPERVISORS

CLEAN AND SPOT CHECK- TO BE DONE IN MORNING BEFORE START OF SCHOOL, AFTER EACH BREAK AND AT END OF SCHOOL DAY (minimum 3 times per day)									
DATE	**TIME**	**CLEAN TOILET/ URINAL** WIPE SINKS/ TAPS/MIRRORS/ DOOR HANDLES/ FLOORS	**CHECK TOILET/ URINAL**	**CHECK DISPENSER STOCK AND REPLENISH**			**EMPTY BINS/ SHE-BINS**	**CLEANED BY**	**COMMENTS**
				TOILET PAPER	**PAPER TOWELS**	**HAND SOAP**			

SUPERVISOR INSPECTION							
DATE	TIME	CHECK STOCK	CHECK TOILETS	CHECK SINK / FITTINGS/ MIRRORS	CHECK FLOORS / WALLS	CHECKED BY	COMMENTS

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