PURPOSE:
To provide a safe, effective and inexpensive procedure for decontaminating urinary drainage bags.

CONSIDERATIONS:
1. Generally, a patient with an indwelling catheter should have two bags of each type - leg and bedside drainage. These provide for a rotation of bags during cleaning periods and an extra bag in case of damage.
2. Leg and bedside bags should be decontaminated daily after use.
3. Usually bags that are decontaminated daily may be reused for 4 weeks. As a rule, when the catheter is changed so should the drainage bags.
4. Cleaning products that can be used to decontaminate are sold at medical supplies stores but usually a 1:10 concentration (150 mL of cold tap water and 15 mL of bleach) of household bleach (sodium hypochlorite 5.25% only) or a 1:3 concentration of white vinegar only (1 quart of white vinegar and 3 quarts of cold tap water; store in a clean gallon container).

[Note: Bleach (sodium hypochlorite) solution should be mixed daily because it will lose its strength quickly and not be effective.]
5. Bleach solution is preferred because it decrystalizes sediment and inhibits bacterial growth. Safe handling of bleach must be taught. It bleach cannot be used safely then vinegar solution is the alternative solution.
6. Instruct patient/caregiver regarding the proper handling of bleach, including measures to prevent inhalation or contact with the skin, eyes and clothing. Avoid bleach contact with stainless steel, chrome and other bathroom fixtures because it will cause rust or corrosion.

EQUIPMENT:
Household bleach 1:10 solution or white vinegar 1:3 solution
Cold tap water
Graduated irrigating bottle, 60 mL syringe, turkey baster or funnel
Gloves

PROCEDURE:
1. Adhere to Standard Precautions.
2. Obtain the prepared decontamination solution (bleach or white vinegar), approximately 200 mL.
3. Empty all urine from bag into the toilet.
4. Fill the bag with cold tap water. If it is a leg bag, fill it through the connector and extension tubing. If it is a bedside bag, fill it through the top tubing with 200 mL cold tap water.
5. Vigorously agitate water in the bag for 10 seconds.
6. Empty the water through the bag's drainage spigot into the toilet.
7. Repeat Steps 4-5 and 6. Rinsing must be done twice.
8. Instill the decontamination solution into the drainage bag using the irrigation bottle, funnel, turkey baster or 60 mL syringe. For bleach solution: Agitate the solution in the bag for 30 seconds, ensuring that the solution touches all inner surfaces of the bag. For white vinegar solution, fill bag about 1/2 full of solution, close the tubing cap and drain and allow to dwell for 30 minutes.
9. If using bleach solution, drain the solution into the toilet, avoiding contact with metal fixtures. DO NOT rinse bag.
10. If using white vinegar solution, drain the solution, then rinse entire system with tap water, and drain again.
11. Hang bag with all caps and spouts open over shower/towel rail to air dry. Protect surface under where drying to prevent damage from any dripping decontamination solution, especially bleach.
12. Discard soiled supplies in appropriate containers.

AFTER CARE:
1. Document in patient's record:
   a. Procedure and observations.
   b. Instructions given to patient/caregiver.
   c. Patient's/caregiver's response.