

Beyond the mop and bucket

There are some new tools in the arsenal when it comes to meeting increasingly strict hygiene and safety regulations, writes **Murray McDonald**, director of Duplex Cleaning Machines.



High temperature steam vapour is a natural agent and therefore well suited to the food and beverage industry.

IF YOU STILL use a mop and bucket in your facility, read on. This low-tech approach should no longer be used in any commercial or industrial setting. Not only are these inefficient cleaning tools, but in most cases they spread dirt, bacteria and product build-up, contaminating other areas of the operation.

Food and beverage companies today have access to new processes and equipment that not only meet hygiene and cleanliness requirements, they are also safer, and can save time and money.

AUTOMATED CLEANING

Ten years ago, cleaning could only be done either before production or after. If it occurred during production hours, machines would usually need to be turned off. Conveyor belt cleaning, in particular, has traditionally been difficult and time-consuming. However, if cleaning doesn't regularly take place, food and residue build-up will affect the quality of product throughout the production process.

These days, thanks to a new generation of automated cleaning systems that are permanently fixed to conveyor belts and bottling lines, cleaning can now be a continuous and automated process. These systems can be used throughout the production process, minimising the disruption and down time associated with cleaning.

HIGH TEMPERATURE STEAM VAPOUR

Steam at a high temperature of around 180°C or more is considered one of the top cleaning methods for killing all bacteria and removing any grime, dirt or oils. Industries such as healthcare currently use this method as a form of infection control and prevention.

Because steam is a natural agent, it is especially well suited to the food and beverage industry where contamination of product from chemical and other toxins is a key concern in the cleaning process. Industrial steam vapour machines come in small, medium or large sizes and normally come with tools and attachments for specific food production cleaning applications.

UV DISINFECTANT TECHNOLOGY

In the last five years, ultra violet light technology has become a popular disinfectant method. UV light disinfects critical surfaces and augments other cleaning processes that have been implemented throughout the day.

UV light technology works as an extra decontamination barrier during the food manufacturing process. For example, when a facility is closed for the evening, a potentially contaminated surface may be left for 12 hours or more. If UV light technology is left on overnight, the facility will be contamination free for the following business day.

Most common cleaning mistakes

- Using a mop and bucket to clean floors. Mops and buckets are an inefficient cleaning method and shouldn't be used in a commercial or industrial environment as they only spread dirt and bacteria, contaminating other surfaces.
- Leaving the cleaning for the end of the production day rather than implementing interval cleaning. This causes the build-up of food residue and scraps to contaminate other product down the production line.
- Overlooking storage and transportation vehicles when it comes to providing a "deep clean". Product can be contaminated after production because transportation vehicles are an ideal breeding ground for mould and bacteria.

HSTO HOMOGENISERS

Typical Applications

- Food & beverage flavours
- Cream liqueurs
- Dairy products
- Fresh milk
- Fruit juices
- Dressings
- Desserts
- Cordials
- Sauces
- Pastes
- Dips



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