industry news

ACS awarded FDA Class 100 project

American Cleanroom Systems (ACS) has been awarded a contract by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to build a suite of Class 100 (ISO 5) cleanrooms for the FDA's Winchester Engineering and Analytical Centre (WEAC).

The WEAC facility located in Winchester, MA, requires the new cleanrooms to provide space for sterility testing and analysis of medical devices, such as surgical instruments, gloves and syringes. The sterility of drugs is also analysed.

ACS designed the cleanroom suite using green design principles. It will incorporate proprietary wash-down wall systems and energy saving features such as the firm's patent pending ACS2000 cleanroom power saver and monitoring system, LED lighting, and Envirco LEDC MAC10 HEPA fan filter units.

ACS builds ISO 4–8 cleanrooms for the pharma, medical device and electronics industries.

www.americancleanrooms.com

EU Biocidal Products Committee ready to handle its first cases

The new EU Biocidal Products Committee (BPC) has agreed working procedures and is now ready to operate.

The final procedures accepted were on approving active substances, granting EU-wide authorisation for biocides and giving opinions on scientific and technical matters regarding mutual recognition.

http://echa.europa.eu/about-us/who-we-are/biocidal-products-committee

PAPER TOWELS THE MOST HYGIENIC WAY TO DRY HANDS, SAY SCIENTISTS

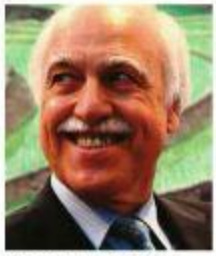
Leading European microbiologists and hospital hygienists have upheld evidence that hand drying using paper towels is associated with lower numbers of microbes on the hands and in the washroom environment than using warm air or high-velocity air dryers.

The six experts, working in Belgium, Germany, Italy, Sweden and the UK, have signed an eight-point statement, *Hand drying: an important part of hand hygiene*, which highlights the importance of hand drying after thorough hand washing and notes that air drying blows water containing microbes off the hands, which can contaminate the washroom environment. They examined studies sponsored by the European Tissue Symposium (see link below) before compiling their statement.

'It appears that there may be a greater risk of exposure to microbes associated with some types of hand driers. There was an increased level of microbial contamination on and beneath air driers, particularly jet air driers,' said Marc Van Ranst, Department of Microbiology and Immunology at the University of Leuven in Belgium.

Roberto Berardi, Chairman of the European Tissue Symposium, added: 'Paper tissue absorbs water and micro-organisms. It is crucial that washrooms offer a method of hand drying that minimises the risk of re-contaminating the hands and blowing microbes onto yourself, others or surfaces around you.'

www.europeantissue.com/hygiene/scientific-literature-on-hygienic-hand-drying/



Marc van Ranst, from the University of Leuven (left) and Roberto Berardi, from the European Tissue Symposium

EDITORIAL

Working towards the greater good

Looking back over 2013, the rate of development and innovation in cleanliness and hygiene continues unabated, whether this is in the area of particle detection and identification, protective clothing, antimicrobial materials, containment of hazardous substances or methods of decontaminating hospital rooms and equipment.

But although this is good news for staff and patients, the benefits will be experienced almost entirely in countries with the money and natural resources to adopt these new technologies. In the meantime, according to UNICEF, pneumonia and diarrhoea together claim the lives of more than 1.7 million children aged under five years across the globe every year.

A lack of resources – not just money, but also power, water, a transport infrastructure and suitable storage facilities – is preserving and even exacerbating the disparity between rich and poor nations in terms of healthcare outcomes, because even rudimentary hygiene measures such as handwashing regimes, clean linens and surgical instruments may be beyond reach.

Much of the attention in the media is focused on the pharmaceutical supply chain: high prices of drugs, counterfeit products with no active ingredients and the inability to get the right drugs to the rights patients at the right time and in the right condition. But underlying this is a much more basic lack of facilities in hospitals and clinics where a lack of clean water and an erratic electricity supply make treating patients an uncertain process on a daily basis.

Two innovations that could make a difference are the ability to sterilise using nanomaterials and the power of the sun (page 50) and a laundry that cleans using compressed carbon dioxide in place of water (page 81). Neither of these will be an instant solution to the many challenges facing the less developed economies, but they do show that researchers and developers are taking into account the fact that the world has only finite resources, while the demands of the global population continue to rise.

The economic returns may not be huge, but the effects on human life could be enormous.

HILARY AYSHFORD
MANAGING EDITOR

PHILLIPS-MEDISIZE EXPANDS FINLAND PLANT AND ADDS CLASS 8 CLEANROOM

Phillips-Medisize, a US-based contract manufacturer, has started production at the 6,000m² expansion to its site in Kontiolahti, Finland. The site manufactures inhalers, insulin pens, transfer devices and syringes.

The expansion includes 1,200m² of Class 8 cleanroom manufacturing and assembly. New high-speed automation lines enable the ramp-up of multi-component, complex drug delivery devices from prototype to automated 24/7 mass production.

Matt Jennings, President and CEO of Phillips-Medisize, said: 'The expansion brings our medical manufacturing area to over 92,900m², with 25,000m² of cleanroom. This, coupled with our in-house tooling, metrology, automated assembly capabilities and creative people, upholds our mission to provide the highest level of satisfaction to our customers.'

www.phillipsmedisize.com