industry news

JET- AND WARM-AIR HAND DRYERS CONTAMINATE AIR IN PUBLIC WASHROOMS, STUDY FINDS

Scientists have found that jet- and warm-air hand dryers can spread bacteria in public toilets. A recent study has shown that jet- and warm-air hand dryers spread bacteria into the air and onto users and those nearby. The findings have significant implications for cleaning, facility and hospitality managers responsible for equipping washrooms in public places.

The study, designed by medical microbiologist Professor Mark Wilcox of the University of Leeds and Leeds Teaching Hospitals, and funded by the European Tissue Symposium (ETS), compared different hand drying methods and their potential to spread bacteria from hands into the air. Jet-air dryers were found to spread greater numbers of bacteria-carrying water droplets and to spread them further than other drying methods. In addition, the bacteria are still present in the air for a considerable time after the dryer has stopped.

In carrying out the study, published in the *Journal of Hospital Infection*, the researchers contaminated hands with *Lactobacillus*, which is not normally found in washrooms, to mimic hands that have been poorly washed. Subsequent detection of the *Lactobacillus* in the air proved that it must have come from the hands during drying.

The experts collected air samples around the dryers and also at distances of one and two metres. Air bacterial counts close to jet-air dryers were found to be 4.5 times higher than around warm-air dryers and 27 times higher compared with using paper towels.

Next to the dryers, bacteria persisted in the air well beyond the 15 second hand-drying time, with approximately half (48%) of the *Lactobacilli* collected more than five minutes after drying ceased. *Lactobacilli* were still detected in the air 15 minutes after hand drying.

'It is not acceptable to have contaminated air in washrooms,' said Marc Van Ranst, Professor in Virology and Chairman of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at the University of Leuven in Belgium.

www.europeantissue.com

Merck Millipore launches film for single-use process containers

Merck Millipore has expanded its single-use film offerings with the addition of PureFlex Plus, a robust, durable film used in the construction of Mobius single-use process containers for biopharmaceutical manufacturing.

PureFlex Plus adds a new, more robust linear low density polyethlene (LLDPE) outer layer, which reduces susceptibility to leaks through abrasion, puncture, stretching and tearing. The inner layers are identical to the original PureFlex product and offer the same extractables profile and gas barrier properties.

Because the fluid contact layer is the same in both films, current users can incorporate PureFlex Plus technology with reduced validation requirements into their film use. Merck Millipore will continue to offer the original PureFlex film for customers who do not wish to change products.

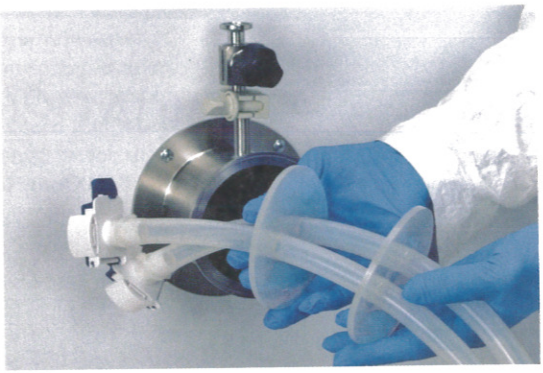
'Biopharmaceutical manufacturers are increasingly incorporating single-use components into their processes to maximise efficiency and reduce costs,' said Andrew Bulpin, Executive Vice President of Merck Millipore, Process Solutions.

'The versatility of the single-use PureFlex film has allowed it to be used throughout the entire production process, limiting validation and implementation effort. The enhanced PureFlex Plus film adds further robustness to our proven film technology, helping to ensure process container integrity even in physically stressful applications.'

Similar to its predecessor, PureFlex Plus is a high purity, medical grade, coextruded film designed to provide strength, flexibility, low gas permeability, and an inert product contact layer.

www.merckmillipore.com

ADVANTAPASS PASS-THROUGH SYSTEM IS AWARDED US PATENT



AdvantaPass uses a single portal for multiple transfer lines

A US patent has been awarded to AdvantaPass, a wall pass-through system designed to transfer fluids between cleanrooms during pharma and biopharma production. The system is said to be the first of its kind to provide complete isolation between manufacturing suites when transferring multiple fluid lines through a single wall portal.

AdvantaPass combines single-use tubing, connectors and seals with permanent, wall-mounted stainless steel components to eliminate cleaning validations associated with cleanroom protocols. 'AdvantaPass involves fewer moving parts and less maintenance than similar systems, and it's easy to assemble and disassemble. It's customisable and can be used with new construction or retrofitted,' said Tony Butler, Manager of Single-Use Applications for AdvantaPure. www.advantapure.com/advantapass.htm

Lombard Medical gains FDA clearance for expanded manufacturing facility in the UK

The US FDA has cleared the way for manufacturing to begin at Lombard Medical's new cleanroom operation in the UK.

The larger facility will expand the medical technology company's global operating footprint and production capabilities to meet increased worldwide customer demand for the Aorfix endovascular stent graft for the treatment of Abdominal Aortic Aneurysms.

The 10,000ft² expansion at the company's manufacturing site in Didcot, Oxfordshire, will accommodate more than 80 production staff.

'The expansion and regulatory clearance of our cleanroom facility is a key operational milestone for Lombard Medical as we focus on growing the commercial traction of Aorfix and building out the organisation for future growth,' said Chief Executive Simon Hubbert.

www.lombardmedical.com

Venair develops high quality silicone hose

Venair Group, a Swiss manufacturer of silicone hoses, has developed Vensil Pharma, a high quality silicone for the pharma and biopharma sectors. The product has taken Venair TechLab, the company's R&D department, two years to develop and has passed multiple tests to allow it to be used in the pharmaceutical industry.

It can be used in most of the company's products such as: Vena Sil 630, Vena Sil 640, Vena Sil 650V, Vena Sil 655, Vena Technosil, Vena Technosil DB and Vena Technoex

www.venair.com