

Antimicrobial Protection

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Due to elevated awareness of global food-safety, a proactive approach to controlling hazards is a fundamental aspect of today's food industry. This requires vigilant documentation and constant review of processes. Product safety in any food operation is paramount.

While there currently is no established guideline requiring food establishments (including processing plants, restaurants and retail meat, deli and bakery departments) to use laundry services, there is a universal expectation within the industry that a sanitized, safe work environment will be maintained.

Of the top 10 common food handling practices that can cause food poisoning, both cross-contamination and infected persons can involve employee uniforms and garments.

Food processors need to adhere to strict food-safety and sanitation procedures in order to minimize the risk of customers contracting a foodborne illness. Cross contamination can cause illness, food poisoning and worse for your customers. Much has been done within the food manufacturing industry to reduce these risks such as the issue of multiple daily change uniforms and protective clothing to prevent the spread of bacteria such as E-coli, Salmonella, MRSA and Listeria. Antimicrobial wash additives provide constant protection for your clothing by inhibiting the growth of bacteria. The continual inhibition of bacterial growth not only reduces the risk of cross contamination but also inhibits the creation of body odours such as sweat and perspiration. Some surface treatments and coatings deteriorate over time, use and laundering. The vast majority of garments sold as "antibacterial" or "antimicrobial" have been treated with organic compounds which will leach out and rapidly become ineffective. An antimicrobial finish produced from inorganic materials, which do not leach out, do not provide a risk to the environment and have no evidence or even suspicion of causing resistant bacterial strains are what is required to give optimum protection. Antimicrobial wash additives can be used with all manner of food hygiene textiles such as garments used in the food manufacturing processes, kitchen uniforms, waitress and waiters uniforms, tea towels, oven cloths, glass cloths, floor cloths, table cloths, napkins and hand towels.

On site Laundry Antimicrobial wash additives are available in convenient bottles with child resistant caps. One 500 ml bottle, for example is sufficient for between 8 to 10 domestic wash loads (based on a 6kg maximum load). Typically the cost per garment, to provide odour free and antimicrobial protection for all of your clothing is no more than 20 cent. Simply added to the rinse cycle of your machine via the fabric conditioner compartment or rinse additive compartment, it will start acting immediately upon all bacteria and will reduce levels by 99.9% on all textiles until the next wash. It will also reduce the risk of cross contamination between washes in your washing machine.

Commercial Laundry You may have signed a contract with an industrial laundry company who either rent garments to you or simply launder your clothing and textiles. Whilst most if not all of these commercial laundries are very good at what they do and ensure that your clothing and textiles have been washed at high temperatures that will thermally disinfect and remove as much of the dirt and staining as possible. In the case of white coloured textiles bleach may also be added which is of obvious benefit when the reduction of bacteria is important to you.

You should ask your laundry to provide you with details of their Antimicrobial/Thermal Disinfection process.

Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) is a systematic preventive approach to food safety and pharmaceutical safety that addresses physical, chemical, and biological hazards as a means of prevention rather than finished product inspection. HACCP is used in the food industry to identify potential food safety hazards, so that key actions, known as Critical Control Points (CCP's) can be taken to reduce or eliminate the risk of the hazards being realized. The system is used at all stages of food production and preparation processes including packaging, distribution, etc