Zingerman's Community of Businesses, a collection of food specialty businesses in Ann Arbor, MI, recently installed Livonia, MI-based American Dryer hand dryers at several of its facilities.

Sustainability and hygiene were two important factors in the decision to upgrade hand dryers.

Deli's Dryers Zap Germs

Cold Plasma Clean hand-dryer technology eliminates microbes and paper waste at Zingerman's food specialty businesses.

Zingerman's continues to expand from its modest deli and mail-order businesses to food, travel, and business-training enterprises.

By installing hand dryers with CPC technology, customers like Zingerman's are not only drying their patrons' hands, they are eliminating harmful microbes in the air.

Zingerman's Community of Businesses, a collection of food specialty businesses in Ann Arbor, MI, that grew out of the original Zingerman's Deli, is committed to sustainable building, energy efficiency, efficient water usage, and green practices. As part of that commitment, Zingerman's recently installed Livonia, MI-based American Dryer hand dryers at three of its facilities. The dryers incorporate American Dryer's Cold Plasma Clean (CPC) technology, which eliminates microbes while drying hands.

CPC's environmental benefits align with Planet Zingerman's, an initiative launched by the company in 2011, the company said. As part of the program, the company recently achieved LEED Gold status for the addition at the original Zingerman's Delicatessen. The company's growth plan, released in 2006, stated: "When we talk about great service we refer not only to our customers, our community, and each other, but also to our planet; we push ourselves to go beyond basic compliance on environmental issues."

Managing partner Grace Singleton first encountered the American Dryer brand at a National Restaurant Association show in Chicago. Singleton compared several dryers and found the appearance, strength, flexibility, and warm air of American Dryer's hand dryers to be the most compelling choice. "Another thing that excited me was that you could moderate the volume," she said. "The dryers also look sanitary."

The company's initial decision to purchase and later upgrade American Dryer's hand dryers was also influenced by Singleton's extensive travel through Europe. "You don't see paper towels in any restrooms. There are just hand dryers everywhere," she said. "And so once you get used to that, you think, wow, why should we be dealing with paper products? They're left on the floor. You have to clean them up. They definitely use more resources than hand dryers. Once you get immersed in that culture, it's hard coming back and seeing all that paper."

In addition to finding a local source, Singleton found an environmentally conscious partner in American Dryer. By installing hand dryers with CPC technology, customers such as Zingerman's are not only drying their patrons' hands, they are eliminating harmful microbes in the air and saving as much as 98% of paper-towel costs. The dryers provide a maintenance-free solution without filters, chemicals, or labor.

Sustainability and hygiene were two important factors in Zingerman's decisions to purchase and upgrade its hand dryers. However, like all company decisions, they were made by committee after many other considerations. Those most impacted by any decision, including staff from the kitchens or front offices, are consulted and asked to share feedback. This contributes to a better overall decision and less regret, according to Singleton. "We find getting more people involved up front helps us get to a better solution," she added.

In the spirit of ongoing improvement, Zingerman's now has 14 hand dryers in three of its facilities, all using CPC technology. Cold plasma, or bipolar ionization, is nature's way of cleaning the air. High levels of ionization are found throughout nature. The cold-plasma generator,

American Dryer, Livonia, MI, recently turned to two microbiology labs for independent testing of the Cold Plasma Clean (CPC) technology used in its ExtremeAir CPC hand dryers. EMSL Analytical Inc. (EMSL), Chicago, is a Centers for Disease Control certified lab with American Industrial Hygiene Association accreditation in industrial hygiene and environmental microbiology. Antimicrobial Test Labs (ATL), Eagan, MN, is an EPA Good Laboratory Practices Standards-compliant laboratory audited by the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Independent studies from EMSL and ATL have shown CPC's effectiveness against E. coli, staph, C. diff, MRSA, and salmonella with kill rates as high as 99.6%. CPC technology has also been independently tested for safety by Underwriters Laboratories, Northbrook, IL, passing the UL867 and California Resource Board standards.

In addition to its hygiene benefits, American Dryer's ExtremeAir CPC provides universal voltage and adjustable sound and speed. An adjustment dial inside the dryer's tamper-resistant enclosure is as easy to use as the sound dial on a car radio. There is no need for a technician or special tools.

The adjustment dial allows adjustments for sound from 83 to 69 dB (the level of normal conversation) with corresponding air speeds of 19,000 to 10,000 linear ft./min. The dryer's universal-voltage feature configures itself to operate on any standard voltage from 100 to 240 V, 50 to 60 Hz, making installation easy and preventing wiring mistakes.

Customer preferences for the precise balance between sound and speed tend to vary by setting. Facility management at sites such as hospitals and restaurants want to keep noise at a minimal level, while schools, factories, sports stadiums, and industrial settings prefer the highest speed setting.

available only inside select American Dryer ExtremeAir models, uses steady-state positive and negative discharge points to split water molecules in the air into oppositely charged hydrogen and oxygen ions. These ions then break down gases to harmless compounds commonly found in the atmosphere, according to a company spokesperson.

Cold-plasma technology has been successfully used to clean the air in schools, hospitals, and other commercial buildings since the 1930s. More recently, cold plasma has been used in the medical industry to treat surgical incisions and break down harmful microbes in the food-processing industry.

Aside from incorporating HEPA filters, conventional hand dryers make a lot of noise and don't eliminate microbes, making them less sanitary, according to Singleton. "We're concerned about the spread of disease, and anything we can do to help ensure Zingerman's has a sanitary environment is a really good thing," she said, adding that employees are very happy with the dryers and their added benefit of improved hygiene. CBP

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- **Circle 6** on the Reader Service Card.
- Specify a hand dryer.
- Calculate operating costs.
- Download a catalog.
- View a green guide.
- Compare hand-dryer models.