

New process delivers new standard in PPE decontamination

Lion Apparel, one of the world's leading suppliers of PPE to the emergency services and military, has invested in a state of the art laundry system that will decontaminate garments to the point of being sterile, whilst at the same time reducing turn around times to customers. The company has introduced a new ozone laundry system at its maintenance and distribution centre in Uxbridge that delivers previously unheard of levels of cleanliness in PPE garments.

Feature



Integrated Clothing Project

Jamie Foot, Operations Manager at Lion Apparel in Uxbridge, says, "The Integrated Clothing Project's risk assessment recognises the need for appropriate protection for search and rescue operations and identifies the risk from exposure to injury due to contact with biological pathogens as greater than the risk to injury from heat and flame. This new process will ensure decontamination from harmful bacteriophage in garments. Our customers require the best possible standard of decontamination and ozone's ability to kill bacteria and viruses is fundamental to supporting emergency responders in today's growing range of potential threats.

"This new ozone system is a winner three times over: it delivers sterile garments, rather than just clean garments; it reduces turnaround times for our customers; and lower water temperature means lower energy consumption."

The new system works at considerably lower temperatures than previously required and dispenses with the need for pre-treatment and rewashing of heavily soiled garments. The new benefits are achieved as a result of a combination of three processes: ozone, mechanical action and detergent.

Lower temperature

During the cleaning cycle tiny bubbles of ozone are fed into each washing machine. Ozone, which is oxygen with an extra atom added to it, penetrates the weave of the material and removes oil and carbon based particles that cling to it. Because of the effectiveness of the ozone stage of the process, the mechanical washing stage can be undertaken at a much lower temperature, 25°C as opposed to the previous 40°C. The detergents that are used in the Lion laundry process have been developed specifically to deal with the type of contamination, such as smoke damage, that the garments will be exposed to.

The benefit of garments that are sterile is obvious, however Lion's

customers are seeing significant secondary benefits in that even with the most heavily contaminated garments, very few require rewash and so the turnaround time is greatly reduced.

to achieve these new standards of decontamination has dropped by up to 75% compared to the previous traditional laundry system.

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