

Why Food Processors Are Turning to Industrial Steam Cleaners

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The FDA, USDA, and some local regulations establish sanitation standards for industrial food processing. These standards protect consumers and are part of the larger system for ensuring food safety. Developing in-house cleaning processes that align with regulations can help your business more easily maintain those standards.

Unfortunately, some cleaning processes are more efficient and effective than others. Conveyor belts, for example, are often difficult to clean and sanitize adequately with traditional cleaning methods: manual cleaning is slow and prone to mistakes, while wet washdown methods and chemical cleaners invite corrosion and chemical residue.

High-temperature dry [steam sanitation](#) eliminates these pitfalls with sanitation cycles that neutralize pathogens, remove buildup, residues and preserve the equipment itself. Since 1952, Electro-Steam has developed innovative dry steam cleaning solutions that provide a sustainable, reliable option for industrial food equipment safety and compliance. Businesses and manufacturers across the [food industry](#) are turning to dry steam cleaners to meet safety standards and to facilitate cleaning operations.

The Challenges of Traditional Sanitation Methods

Industrial food preparation and processing can be a messy business in need of frequent, thorough cleaning. Crumbs, residue, grease, and contaminants can get everywhere as a result of mixing, cooking, and baking operations. If not addressed regularly, stubborn buildup can accumulate along the flat surfaces of conveyor belts and, even worse, the intricate internal gears and workings. Trace amounts of allergens like nuts and gluten can easily contaminate the entire subsequent batch of goods if not handled properly. What's more, subpar cleaning introduces liabilities, including downtime and health hazards from chemical residue, biofilm, and microbes. In many of these cases, manual scrubbing can't eliminate these risks entirely, which is why dry steam cleaning is a superior and popular sanitization method.

Manual Cleaning

Cleaning food processing equipment by hand is a big business liability, that increases the risk of:

- Chemical residue from harsh cleaners.
- Inconsistent levels of cleanliness, leading to contamination cycles, recalls, and legal liability.
- Delays, downtime and bottlenecks because manual cleaning is slow.
- Wet Water Pressure Cleaning

Wet water pressure systems hose equipment down with water from high-pressure jets. But even the high pressures can fail to remove buildup from hard-to-reach surfaces. Excess water can also leave walkways, floors and equipment slippery, which opens the door to injuries and OSHA violations. For companies that want to prioritize sustainability, water cleaning also generates excessive wastewater making it a less attractive choice.

The Benefits of Adopting Industrial Steam Cleaners

Instead of manual chemical cleaning or high-volume water pressure cleaning, more and more food processors are switching to dry steam cleaning systems. These heat the water to produce a very dry steam, which targets buildup and hard-to-reach areas with penetrating, sanitizing steam. The [benefits of steam cleaning include:](#)

Thorough cleaning and sanitizing. Dry steam dissolves fats, oils, grease, and grime that otherwise require chemicals or hard scrubbing. High-temperature steam loosens layers of buildup, kills pathogens, and sanitizes all surfaces, including out-of-reach surfaces and intricate machinery.

Better operational efficiency. While other food production cleaning processes might require partial or complete disassembly to reach all the contaminated surfaces, dry steam cleaning can be used in clean-in-place (CIP) solutions. Operators can sanitize an entire conveyor system without disassembling any portion and easily follow industrial sanitation best practices. Because the cleaning cycles are faster and don't require reassembly, facilities can also benefit from more uptime and complete multiple orders faster.

Cost savings. Dry steam does not require expensive chemicals or hours of manual labor per cleaning cycle. It also uses much less water (and generates much less wastewater), leading to significant savings. And, when equipment is cleaner, it works better, with fewer breakdowns and less wear, for overall system savings.

Sustainability. Dry steam cleaning is more eco-friendly, not just more budget-friendly. Businesses can reduce water consumption by up to 99%. By eliminating harsh chemical cleaners, companies also reduce the amount of chemicals entering the facility drainage systems.

Safety. Better cleaning cycles ensure a higher degree of food safety and product quality. But they also protect workers. Dry steam eliminates exposure to harsh chemicals and doesn't create water logged and detergent laden slippery surfaces like traditional wet cleaning.

Diverse Applications of Dry Steam Cleaning Across the Food Industry

Virtually all food processors can benefit from making the switch to dry steam cleaning systems. Electro-Steam serves the following sectors and more in the food and beverage industry:

- Baking. Dry steam cleans conveyor belts, ventilation systems, and even electrical assemblies to eliminate pests, pathogens, and chemicals.
- Beverage and packaging. Dry steam isn't moist, so it is safe for sensitive electrical systems. Dry steam can also reach the entire interior surface of blending tanks and other equipment between batches, making it ideal for preventing cross-contamination.
- Dairy processing. Steam cleaning breaks down and removes wet food residue. This eliminates the growth of pathogens and microorganisms, especially in dairy and other sensitive processing systems, where eliminating the risk of disease or contamination is vital.
- Meat and poultry processing. Steam cleaners remove buildup and traces of product and fats on conveyor belts and cutting tools, meeting USDA standards for raw and cooked meat products.

Partner With Electro-Steam for Your Sanitation Needs

Dry steam cleaning systems outperform manual and wet cleaning options as the most thorough and effective sanitation method. Facilities can efficiently and consistently remove buildup, neutralize pathogens, and meet sanitation standards, all without the long delays and harsh chemicals that other cleaning processes entail.

Electro-Steam provides a diverse line of Made in the USA dry steam generators for different types of facilities and cleaning requirements. For example, our Eagle Series Automatic Brushless Belt Cleaner and Jet system, integrate with conveyors and existing production processes for a simple transition. Electro-Steam has been manufacturing and developing industrial steam equipment since 1952, and we bring our decades of experience in customer service and steam application knowledge to every product. [Contact us today](#) to learn more or [request a free demo](#) to see how our dry steam cleaners help food processors.