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ThermaPure Heads Discuss Structural Pasteurization

By Steve Sauer

Amid increased press coverage of the remediation process involving heat, leaders of the company holding the patent for the process made themselves available to *IE Connections* for a question-and-answer session last month.

Dave Hedman and Larry Chase, who are the president and vice president of California-based E-Therm Inc., detailed the evolution of the process from its origins with 19th-century scientist Louis Pasteur's applications toward food, through uses to kill termites, insects, bacteria and, eventually, mold. Today, the company licenses out the process to trained franchisees under the ThermaPure name.

"The process is used to increase the temperature of a structure to a target temperature that is adequate to kill or reduce significantly various organisms," said Chase. "It is used in conjunction with traditional remediation, oftentimes added to the end of it as a polisher."

"We see this simply as another tool for the [industrial hygiene] professional," said Hedman. "This is something that we want to provide to the IH professionals and let them decide how they would choose to use it, using their discretion. In fact, we insist that our licensees as we train them in the technology work in conjunction with IH professionals, test pre- and post-[remediation], and have written specifications."

The two pointed out that "Zinsser Microbiology," a now out-of-print industrial

hygiene resource, says heat is "the most reliable and universally applicable method of sterilization and, whenever possible, should be the method of choice." Hedman and Chase agreed that heat is not fit for every job, but it should be considered for "a plethora of applications for organic material."

"For many consultants and remediation companies, having this tool may open up new opportunities in the indoor remediation arena," said Hedman. "We want people who are schooled in the technology to think outside of the box."

The E-Therm executives also lined up another call participant in Sean P. Abbott, Ph.D., who has authored research supporting the use of heat in killing mold. Abbott is the president of Natural Link Mold Lab in Sparks, Nev. One of the big advantages he described with using heat is its "thoroughness." He said, "If you have highly sensitive people in a space or structure, school, residence or whatever, the thoroughness of ThermaPure will improve the quality of air for those people. Clearly, [for] people who already are sick for some other reason – if they're HIV-positive, undergoing chemotherapy or asthmatic – this thoroughness provides additional protection."

"The beauty of ThermaPure is that while it disinfects, it dries," added Hedman. "We're doing very thorough drying with the heat. Moisture is a critical component of the development of microbiological organisms, and heat removes moisture."

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