

## **Laleham Healthcare – Energy efficient hand drying in healthcare**

Low energy Mitsubishi Electric Jet Towel hand dryers are helping one of the south's most ethical manufacturing companies attain ever higher eco-standards, as well as maintaining the most demanding hygiene protocols.

Laleham Healthcare is a contract manufacturer, packer and developer of products of toiletries, nutritional liquids and pharmaceuticals (human and veterinary). Its clients include some of the biggest brands in the high street, leading medicine companies and small independent businesses alike. Much of this work is highly specialised and includes: contract fill and overflow work; bulk manufacture; product and process development and scale-up programmes, quality assurance and control to the highest standards. It works across several sectors including Natural and Organic products.

Purpose built in 2001, the factory site has 17,000m<sup>2</sup> spanning production lines, manufacturing and materials and finished goods warehousing. With over 250 staff currently on site, Laleham continues to invest in people and services with state of the art equipment to compliment the broad range of product requirements.

"We run a three shift system, five days a week, and can offer greater capacity over seven days to suit specific needs," explains Rhys Hayes Safety and Environmental Projects Manager at Laleham's. "This means we need to cater for something like 5,000-10,000 hand washing sessions a week.

"We are a very ethical organisation and strive for best practise in everything we do. Our environmental goals are constantly being re-set higher and higher.

Previously Laleham mainly used paper towels for hand drying, plus a few old warm air dryers which Hayes was aware were very energy hungry. This was on top of the fact that the used paper towels were going to landfill, which in itself lead to considerable vehicle usage, plus the need to employ extra maintenance staff.

"We strive to steadily reduce our energy consumption, so I model the energy consumption related to most of our operations. When it came to hand drying, the total energy bill added up significantly and I started looking around for low energy dryers."

The Jet Towel is manufactured by Mitsubishi Electric and is far from the normal run of hand dryers. Instead of using a relative slow but large flow of warm air to evaporate moisture from hands, it optimises the process by using a high speed stream to blow it off. The clever nozzle design produces a laminar flow so all the air is effective and none is wasted.

In fact Jet Towel's motor power consumption is only 550W; a fifth of that of a traditional hand dryer and barely half that of similar systems. This provides an incredible environmental benefit, saving up to 80% of the energy and reducing 50% of the CO2 emissions.

The nozzles are so meticulously shaped that no energy is wasted creating extraneous noise, all the power goes into creating the flow. At about 58dB Jet Towel is whisper quiet, something that cannot be said for many other dryers.

“Obviously hygiene is also a major concern to us, and Jet Towel has excellent credentials,” comments Hayes. “The moisture is blown straight into a drain tank eliminating any bacteria wafting around the room. And to help further it is made from an anti-microbial material on all surfaces.”

Another feature that makes Jet Towel particularly appropriate in the workplace is the speed of drying, from only 9 seconds as opposed to 40 seconds for a traditional dryer. At work people tend to pop to the bathroom during their breaks, leading to sudden rushes; if there is a queue for the slow dryers many people will walk out with wet hands – taking all sorts of bugs with them.

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