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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



We like questions. Questions help us understand our clients better, challenge us to improve and serve as a sense check for all we do – how does X feature benefit clinicians, for example.

As we get to know new clients, questions inevitably crop up in discussions – as one would expect – about particular features, services or even specific products.

As such we decided to share with you our most frequently asked questions:

1. Macerators block all the time, don't they?

We hear this question a *lot*. The short answer is: our macerators do not block very often at all, providing they are used correctly.

Some macerators work a lot like the toilet on a commercial aeroplane. They fill the chamber with water, macerate the pulp, and then open a dump valve, flushing the contents of the chamber – macerated or not – into the soil pipe. This method increases the likelihood of pulp 'hardening' in pipes, as it floats on top of the rushing water, which sweeps by quickly, leaving the pulp behind on the sides and roof of the pipe.

Because our macerators spray the pulp with water throughout the maceration cycle, rapidly slice the pulp into pieces only a few millimetres in size, and use a continuous flow of water throughout the cycle, it's actually incredibly difficult to block our machines. Unless you overload them or put things inside that aren't meant to be there, like latex gloves, aprons and face masks.

2. Aren't bedpan washers just clever washing machines?

Considering the awareness surrounding infection control, we're always surprised not only by the fact that this question comes up, but by how often.

In the basic act of placing an object into a machine which cleans it, we suppose, yes, a bedpan washer is similar to a washing machine.

However, there is an awful lot more to it than that. Our bedpan washers are specifically designed to clean reusable bedpans *and* disinfect them.

Multi-directional nozzles also ensure that the bedpan is cleaned inside as well as out so the bedpan is fully disinfected.

Steam is created within the chamber and heated to the optimal temperature to kill – or render inert – harmful microbes.

3. Can't I just wash bedpans by hand?

Following on from question two, we regularly come into contact with facilities – most notably care homes – which would prefer to wash bedpans by hand. Although we suspect the individual doing the washing would feel differently.

Whilst you can wash bedpans by hand, all modern infection control guidance strongly advises against it. The unpleasantness notwithstanding, it is almost impossible to ensure that the bedpan has been adequately disinfected. This poses considerable risk to the next resident who uses it.

Furthermore, the care worker has been heavily exposed to harmful microbes during the cleaning process. They are now a potential vector who is moving throughout the facility,



coming into contact with residents and other staff. Plus anyone else they come into contact with outside of work.

This can cause a major outbreak and with super bugs like *Clostridium difficile* (C. diff) which is potentially fatal for 1 in 30 over 65s, this should not be taken lightly.

4. Do I really need a new solution?

It would be very easy for us to say yes but in truth it entirely depends on the age of your current solution, its frequency of use, how often it fails, and the current level of infection control it offers.

Our machines, assuming they are well maintained, last an average of 9.8 years. Yes, we ran the numbers. The industry average is closer to 7 so if your machine is approaching that age then it may be time to upgrade.

Similarly, if your machine is failing regularly or you're finding outbreaks are occurring with increasing regularity then your bedpan washer may be failing to heat the bedpans to the correct temperature or for long enough.

5. Will installation be a disruption?

If the installation is part of a new build then this is a non-issue. However we understand that hospitals and care homes are busy places and their sluice/dirty utility/pan rooms are one of the most commonly used rooms in the building.

We will work with you to ensure that any installation causes as little disruption as possible. Our qualified engineer will remove the old machine (where applicable), install the new one and run test cycles to ensure that everything is working as it should

They won't leave until you are totally satisfied and relevant parties have been shown how to use the machine correctly.

6. Do you provide training?

We offer training for all stakeholders as part of the installation process. This covers day to day operating, cleaning cycles, incorrect use/overloading and safety.

We can also run dedicated or top-up course as needed. It's important to us that everyone feels confident using the solution so we can repeat the training as often as you require.

We also run training specifically designed to give onsite engineers the knowledge to correctly maintain our bedpan washers and pulp macerators. This keeps your sluice/dirty utility/pan room running smoothly, reducing the likelihood of breakdowns

7. Why do I have to pay for disposal?

Well the short answer is: you don't.

However, disposing of a piece of machinery that also happens to be a biohazard is not easy and not cheap.

In the UK it is against the law for businesses to dispose of *any* electrical equipment at the local recycling and municipal waste centre, be it a kettle or major hardware.

As such you need to either contract a disposal service or hire a skip.

But this doesn't deal with the potential risk of infection. Your average appliance disposal service won't take a bedpan washer or pulp macerator. They leave it to specialist services like us.



Simply tossing the machine in a skip won't do either, as incorrectly disposing of potentially infectious hardware or material can land you with some hefty fines if you contravene the following:

- The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (including the Duty of Care Regulations)
- The Controlled Waste Regulations 2012
- The Hazardous Waste Directive 2011
- The Carriage of Dangerous Goods Regulations

Seeing as it's very easy to trace a machine back to its owner, there's a good chance you'll get caught. The perceived saving of disposing of the machine yourself quickly vanishes in the face of the potential fines and criminal charges. Not to mention the negative press.

Using DDC Dolphin to dispose of your machines means that the machine is safely and ethically disposed of. Infectious components are incinerated and where possible the remaining components are recycled.

Prior to removal we also put the machine through a disinfection cycle and cap all the pipes so the risk of infection is kept to an absolute minimum.

DDC Dolphin is committed to fighting the spread of infection at all stages of the infection control process – including machine end of life.

If you have any questions about infection control or our solutions contact our team of experts today who will be more than happy to help.

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