BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH STAINLESS STEEL DRAINS

Stainless steel drains are aesthetically pleasing, functional, and surprisingly green.

BY RUSS KLETTKE

Even in some of the most hygiene-critical environments—think food and pharmaceutical manufacturing—the pathogens that live and breed down there need to be washed away before they can harm products and people a few feet above. John Henry knows a few things about that, having spent many years dealing with food processing plants, while manufacturing industrial baking machinery in a family-owned business. And it’s why today he and Shelia Heller run Greenville, Texas-based StainlessDrains.com. They knew that by improving upon the commonly used cast iron, PVC, and porcelain drains and strainers bacteria, viruses, microbes, and fungi are less likely to propagate. These things matter in the immediate time frame because they prevent the spread of foodborne illnesses (i.e., sicknesses caused by Salmonella, Listeria, and E. coli), to name a few. The CDC estimates 47.8 million people get sick each year—and 3,000 people die—from contaminated food. But over the long life of stainless steel drains, the health of the earth is protected as well.
Two product enhancements add to the effectiveness of StainlessDrains.com systems. First, plugged drains mean waste can accumulate on a floor. How do drains plug if screens are used? Irresponsible workers sometimes dump solids that were captured by a drain strainer into the drain anyway instead of in dry waste disposal. The company’s EZ-Stop-Lock uses a stainless housing lock with a magnet key to ensure employees with that responsibility do the task correctly.

Another product, the Eco-Guard trap seal, is used in the outlet connections of floor drain bodies (or inside floor drain strainers). The devices’ flexible silicone sealing ribs permit an outflow as needed but also prevent liquid backflow, sewage odors, and insects from entering the facilities.

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**STAINLESS STEEL IS RECYCLED AND RECYCLABLE**

The resilience properties of stainless steel are what make it so popular. It’s resistant to high and low temperatures, it’s strong and durable (corrosion resistant), easy to clean, and long-lasting. But it’s also highly recyclable (90% of end-of-life stainless steel is recycled) and very often contains a high degree of recycled material itself (about 60%).

StainlessDrains.com sends its own manufacturing waste to recycling vendors, who readily reproprocess the valuable material (the waste is minimal, however; credit lean manufacturing and laser technology). Every ton of recycled stainless steel saves 1,100 kilograms of iron ore, 630 kilograms of coal, and 55 kilograms of limestone.