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# 3 STEPS TO CLEANING COMPLIANCE FOR YOUR ENTIRE FOOD FACILITY

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# INTRODUCTION

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In the food manufacturing industry, cleaning is business-critical. Not only are recalls an ever-present threat, but the FDA, USDA, OSHA, and even insurance companies can levy hefty financial penalties on companies that don't take the necessary actions to keep their customers and their employees safe.

One of the biggest cleaning challenges food manufacturers face is the amount of cleaning that needs to be done. Production equipment and processing areas are typically cleaned every day, while warehouses and office areas might be cleaned once a week. These areas have different cleaning requirements and may be subject to different, but overlapping, regulations by multiple agencies.

The only way to meet compliance requirements for all applicable regulations, thereby ensuring both food and worker safety, is to take a holistic view of your cleaning processes. This eBook outlines a three-step process to help you do just that.



**STEP 1:**

# UNDERSTAND YOUR FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL CLEANING COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

Food manufacturers have a maze of regulations to navigate. The table below provides a brief overview of some of the regulations that set cleaning standards and requirements for food manufacturing facilities.\*

**Cleaning Compliance for Food Manufacturing**

Regulatory Body	Standards/Rules	Cleaning Objectives
FDA: Food safety	<a href="#">Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preventing pathogen contamination</li> <li>• Preventing allergen cross-contamination</li> <li>• Following Current Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMPs)</li> </ul>
USDA: Food safety	<a href="#">Sanitation Performance Standards</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining sanitary conditions in meat and poultry establishments</li> </ul>
OSHA: Worker health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Walking-Working Surfaces Standard</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Combustible Dust National Emphasis Program</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preventing slip, trip, and fall accidents</li> <li>• Keeping dust accumulation to a minimum</li> </ul>
NFPA: Fire prevention**	<a href="#">Multiple standards</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preventing fires and explosions</li> </ul>
State and local agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State OSHA laws</li> <li>• Building codes</li> <li>• Fire codes</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the above</li> </ul>

**The cost of non-compliance**

Failure to comply with regulatory standards can cost you a pretty penny. Even minor FSMA and OSHA violations can result in penalties of thousands of dollars, as well as the hassle of increased inspections. In the case of major violations, OSHA has been known to hand out fines totaling millions of dollars, and the FDA and some state and local authorities have the power to suspend operating licenses. Of course, the worst case scenario is a recall, which averages \$10 million in direct costs alone.

The bottom line is this: **Whatever investment you need to make to comply with regulations, it will always be less than the cost of non-compliance.**

\* Please note that this is not an exhaustive list.

\*\* The National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) doesn't have enforcement authority, but many Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJs), including OSHA, have adopted its standards.

## STEP 2:

# IDENTIFY CLEANING TASKS AND EQUIPMENT FOR ALL AREAS OF YOUR FACILITY

As someone involved in food manufacturing, you're undoubtedly familiar with the concept of environmental monitoring zones, aka swabbing zones. This is a framework for dividing a facility into regions based on the probability of pathogen contamination. Here, we'll borrow the zone framework to highlight the cleaning needs of different areas of a food manufacturing plant.

### Zones in a Food Manufacturing Plant

Zone	Definition	Examples
Zone 1	All direct food contact surfaces	Conveyor belts, oven racks, work tables
Zone 2	Non-food contact surfaces; areas directly adjacent to Zone 1	Exterior of equipment, floors in the production area
Zone 3	Areas surrounding Zone 2	Warehouses, hallways leading to the production area, employee locker rooms
Zone 4	Areas surrounding Zone 3	Offices, cafeterias, hallways, loading docks



**Cleaning in Zone 1: Production line equipment**

In food safety terms, Zone 1 is the most critical area. Since these are direct food contact surfaces, any pathogen in this zone will cause product contamination.

The purpose of cleaning in Zone 1 is to eliminate all deposits and residues so the areas can be sanitized. You can't sanitize something that isn't clean. In most food facilities, the preferred method of cleaning food contact equipment is high pressure washing because it provides highly efficient removal of residues and deposits.

Examples of Zone 1 cleaning tasks	Recommended equipment*
Cleaning the interior of stainless steel tanks	
Cleaning food preparation surfaces	
Removing food residue from conveyor belts	<a href="#">MH 4M-2800 Hot Water Pressure Washer</a> <a href="#">MC 5M-2300 Cold Water Pressure Washer</a>
Removing baked-on surface deposits from thermal processing equipment	
Removing food deposits from size reduction equipment	

**Cleaning in Zone 2: Processing and packaging areas**

Zone 2 comprises the non-food contact surfaces in the production area. Contaminants here can still get into the product by being transferred to food contact surfaces via equipment, employees, or even water or air flow.

Since Zone 2 includes floors, as well as the exteriors of machinery, this is an area where worker safety and fire prevention also become a concern.

Examples of Zone 2 cleaning tasks	Recommended equipment*
Cleaning the exterior of stainless steel tanks and equipment	<a href="#">MH 4M-2800 Hot Water Pressure Washer</a> <a href="#">MC 5M-2300 Cold Water Pressure Washer</a>
Cleaning the floors surrounding production equipment	<a href="#">SW900 Walk-Behind Sweeper</a> <a href="#">SC750 Walk-Behind Scrubber</a> <a href="#">VHT EXP Series Three-Phase Vacuum</a>
Removing dust from overhead pipes/ sections of equipment	<a href="#">VHS110 EXP Single-Phase Vacuum</a>
Collecting excess trim and scraps from packaging lines	<a href="#">R Series Trim Collection Vacuum</a>



\*Nilfisk has other solutions available as well. A recommendation for your consideration would be made by a local Nilfisk representative after an assessment of the facility and application.

**Cleaning in Zone 3: Warehouse and storage areas**

In Zone 3, contamination is less of an issue. However, contaminants from this area can still get into the products, they'd have to be assisted by humans or machinery (and also likely poor hygiene practices). Instead, the primary concerns are worker safety and fire prevention.

Examples of Zone 3 cleaning tasks	Recommended equipment*
Cleaning warehouse floors	<a href="#">CS7010 Combination Sweeper-Scrubber</a> <a href="#">VHS110 Class II, Division 2 Vacuum</a>
Cleaning the walls (production and other areas)	<a href="#">MH 4M-2800 Hot Water Pressure Washer</a> <a href="#">MC 5M-2300 Cold Water Pressure Washer</a> <a href="#">VHS110 EXP Single-Phase Vacuum</a>
Removing dust from overhead pipes	<a href="#">VHS110 Class II, Division 2 Vacuum</a>

**Cleaning in Zone 4: Supporting areas**

Finally, Zone 4 consists of areas not likely to pose contamination risks. Here, the focus is on general cleaning to make a great impression on employees and visitors as well as to prevent slips, trips and falls.

Examples of Zone 4 cleaning tasks	Recommended equipment*
Cleaning hallway and office floors	<a href="#">SC500 Walk-Behind Scrubber</a> <a href="#">GD 5 Battery Backpack Vacuum</a>
Cleaning outdoor areas (e.g., front entrance, loading dock)	<a href="#">SW8000 Rider Sweeper</a> <a href="#">MC 5M-2300 Cold Water Pressure Washer</a>



\*Nilfisk has other solutions available as well. A recommendation for your consideration would be made by a local Nilfisk representative after an assessment of the facility and application.

## STEP 3:

# SELECT A PARTNER THAT CAN PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE CLEANING SOLUTION

Now you understand some of your compliance requirements (or at least have a better idea of the variety of standards you need to meet), and you've identified the main cleaning tasks in each zone and the equipment you need to perform these tasks. The final step is finding a partner that can help you accomplish your goals by providing high-quality equipment, service and support. Here are some key expectations your supplier should be able to meet:

### 1. All of the equipment you need

In the past, you might have had to go to three or four different suppliers to obtain pressure washers, sweepers, scrubbers, and vacuums. Fortunately, that's no longer the case. Today's top suppliers can provide all of the [equipment](#) you need, which simplifies not only your procurement process, but also your training process, service and maintenance contracts, and more.

### 2. Site assessments

Step 2 of this eBook provided some equipment recommendations for different areas of your facility. But there are other options as well, and which equipment will best meet your needs depends on your application. For example, how big is your facility? Are you manufacturing RTE meals or baking sandwich bread? Do you shut down your equipment for cleaning every night or do you run three 8-hour shifts per day? A [site visit](#) allows your supplier to see your operations first-hand so they can make appropriate recommendations.

### 3. Equipment demos

As part of the site assessment, or as a follow-up, you should always demo the equipment. How else can you be sure that it's really as effective and easy-to-use as the marketing brochure claims it is? Especially when you're working with a new supplier or a new type of equipment, make sure you get the opportunity for some hands-on experience.

### 4. Post-sale training and maintenance

Industrial cleaning equipment isn't like a mop or a broom. It requires training to use it effectively, as well as regular maintenance so it will serve you well for years to come. Don't settle for a supplier that disappears after the sale. Insist on a partner that will provide post-sale training for operators and maintenance support. For example, [Nilfisk University](#) is an interactive environment that provides on-demand training, knowledge sharing and more.

### 5. Parts and service

Even with regular maintenance, machines break down - parts need to be replaced and repairs performed. Look for a partner that has a national parts and service network. This will give you quick access to parts and service so you can keep downtime to a minimum.

### 6. Green cleaning options

Sustainability is one of the hottest topics in the food industry today. Not only are companies looking to be more environmentally friendly, but consumers are choosing to purchase from companies that embrace corporate social responsibility. By investing in green cleaning options, like [Nilfisk's EcoFlex™ system](#), you can boost your sustainability credentials while also saving money on energy and chemicals.

### 7. Ongoing innovation

Finally, make sure you select a partner that's committed to ongoing innovation. This can take many forms - advances in equipment, new cleaning technologies or even software platforms. For example, [Nilfisk's TrackClean™ system](#) is a revolutionary fleet management system that provides greater visibility into your cleaning operations so you can reduce costs and improve productivity.

## About Nilfisk

As one of the world's leading suppliers of professional cleaning equipment, Nilfisk offers an extensive product portfolio of high quality and reliable floor cleaning, industrial vacuum and high pressure washer products.

Nilfisk has been trusted for more than 110 years to deliver superior cleaning power to meet the highest industry standard and regulations, while reducing costs and improving productivity.

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