

Micronclean's Commitment to Sustainability



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Micronclean is committed to reducing its impact on the environment. This commitment is important personally to the owning Fry family and is a key aspect of Micronclean's SKIEs values, being described in both the Stewardship and Excellence values. Micronclean formally sets out this commitment in its Environmental and Energy Policy.

This document describes Micronclean's commitment to sustainability, exploring past progress, present activities and future ambitions.



The Past

Micronclean's company history is in the laundry industry, an industry that enables safe reuse of textiles, whether they be linen or technical cleanroom garments. The laundry industry is also a significant user of natural resources – water for washing, energy to generate heat for washing and drying, packaging materials, and fuel for logistics.

Micronclean's commitment to sustainability is long-standing and is driven by the owning Fry family. This led the company to establish formal structures and systems to address sustainability, leading it to become the first laundry – and one of the first companies in the UK – to have a certified environmental management system, originally certified in the early 1990s against the British Standard BS 7750. The certificate was presented to the company by Dr David Bellamy.. Micronclean now operates certified ISO 14001 environmental management and ISO 50001 energy management systems.

Micronclean's Louth facility, opened in 2003, is a visible demonstration of Micronclean's commitment to the environment. The plant was designed with the latest laundry technology available at the time of building. Further, building on Micronclean's corporate membership and long-term support of the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, the site includes a wildflower meadow and pond.





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Sustainability at the Louth site has improved since its opening, the site now uses a sustainable groundwater source, improvements have been made to boiler efficiency through water quality management, and reductions in laundry process energy usage have also been made at the site without impacting the high quality of service demanded by Micronclean's customer base who operate in quality-critical industries such as pharmaceuticals, medical devices and food.

The hygiene and cleanliness of textiles supplied by Micronclean to its customers are of utmost importance. Therefore, due to the need to protect the integrity of its products, Micronclean is a significant user of packaging including plastic and cardboard. Packaging efficiency is a core principle for Micronclean in its product and process development efforts, with efficiency being achieved primarily through optimising packaging size, reducing the gauge of packaging materials, and – as far as practical – using recyclable packaging materials.

Logistics has been a further area of focus for Micronclean. Supplying its textiles services nationally across the UK, Micronclean operates a fleet of over 30 vehicles. In its sustainability efforts, Micronclean has established a system for efficient management of routes with fuel efficiency as a core objective. Efficiency has been achieved through route analysis and rationalisation, resulting in a reduction of total CO2 emissions per product unit shipped.

More recently, Micronclean has built its first cleanroom laundry in India. In a country such as India where natural resources are already stretched, the need for improvements in sustainability in the industry is starkly visible. Micronclean's facility, opened in 2021, has several features that improve the sustainability of the process (read the article).



These include solar power infrastructure use of sustainable water sources including rainwater harvesting, and water recycling and reuse. Further, Micronclean made the decision to sterilise cleanroom garments on-site using steam sterilisation, which has various environmental benefits including a reduction in logistics mileage and an increase in textile life.

The Present

Like all companies, Micronclean must take advantage of opportunities and must tackle challenges to become a truly sustainable organisation. Micronclean remains committed to its sustainability journey and is making changes now to continue its progress.



Micronclean is making organisational changes to ensure sustainability remains a priority. A restructure of the Micronclean board will see the addition of a director responsible for Quality, Health and Safety and Environment. This brings the environmental function into the board room, ensuring this increasingly important area has sufficient strategic direction and operational focus. Goals and objectives will be set for sustainability, which will be clearly communicated throughout the organisation, bringing companywide awareness, motivation and effort.

Practically speaking, Micronclean has several live projects to address sustainability challenges.

Micronclean's transport department, as a key carbon contributor for the company, is assessing opportunities to move to zero- or low-carbon



transport. Electric cars and vans are being trialed on a limited basis to assess commercial and practical viability.

Micronclean's engineering department is exploring technologies that can reduce the environmental impact of heat use within the company's laundry facilities. Heat is an essential tool in the processes of cleaning, decontaminating and sterilising workwear. In a typical laundry operation heat is most efficiently generated and distributed in the form of steam from a gas- or oil-fired boiler. New technologies may allow decarbonisation of heat generation, as well as greater efficiency in heat recovery and reuse.

Further, Micronclean's R+D department is researching solutions to the environmental burden of plastic packaging in the supply of cleanroom products. The key aims of this work are to reduce plastic use and to identify more sustainable packaging types in scenarios where product protection is essential (e.g. protecting the integrity of sterile products).

The Future

Micronclean maintain ambitious goals to create a more sustainable future. Micronclean has the passion to be a leader amongst its peers in this respect to help create change on an industry level. Micronclean's goals will create wide-ranging opportunities and challenges across the business, including the following.

Micronclean intends to lead its industry in the development of a green logistics operation. Current trials of green vehicle technology will lay the foundations to develop a vision for the future of logistics at Micronclean.

Micronclean's supply chain policies will require significant work to establish sustainability as a key driver in decision making. The recent pandemic has demonstrated the fragility of global supply chains. The subsequent effort to establish more resilient routes of supply can harmonise well with sustainability goals. Micronclean believes there is a unique opportunity at the current time to drive



progress in this area.

Finally, Micronclean intends to make significant investments in infrastructure in the next decade to modernise and consolidate its operations into a campus site. Micronclean is determined to deliver a carbon-neutral campus. This will be a huge challenge, among other things requiring decarbonisation of core processes, green energy infrastructure and implementation of modern technologies. Building on recent successes and current projects, decarbonisation feels achievable.

Closing Comment

Micronclean has a long-standing commitment to doing business while reducing its environmental impact. This is borne out in the successes and 'firsts' that Micronclean has achieved in recent decades. Through its SKIEs values, and the shared ambitions of its owners and management team, Micronclean maintains ambitions to lead in sustainability amongst its peers, deploying new employees, thinking and technology to create a sustainable future.





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