

Evaluating Surface Cleanliness

Why do I need an “ATP” meter?

An ATP meter is used as a tool to evaluate the cleanliness of a surface before and after Sterile Doctor™ applications.

What is ATP?

ATP – or adenosine triphosphate – is an enzyme that is present in all living cells.

What does an ATP meter do?

An ATP monitoring system measures the amount of organic material in a sample and is used effectively in the assessment of a surface’s degree of cleanliness. Hospitals and restaurants are among the many industries utilizing ATP monitoring systems as a method of assessing the effectiveness of their sanitation efforts and protocols.

How does an ATP monitor work?

Surfaces are swabbed and treated with a reagent that illuminates ATP within a sample. The ATP monitor detects the luminescence and quantifies the amount of ATP in the sample. Results are immediate.

What does an ATP reading mean?

The Hygenia SystemSURE ATP monitor measures ATP in RLUs (relative light units). The reading number represents 1/1,000th of the actual RLUs identified (i.e. a reading of 90 indicates 90,000 RLUs).

What ATP readings are considered unsanitary?

General Applications

- 0 – 100 RLU = pass
- 101 – 200 RLU = marginal
- > 201 RLU = in need of sanitation

Healthcare and Foodservice Applications

- 0 – 90 RLU = pass
- 91 – 115 RLU = marginal
- > 116 RLU = in need of sanitation

What are other methods of inspection to monitor surface cleanliness?

Visual assessment is among the most common, and the most inaccurate as microbes are invisible to the human eye. Lab tests of cultures is the most accurate and specific (microbes can be identified by type), but can take up to a week for results to be published.

What are the benefits of ATP testing?

ATP testing allows institutions to estimate surface microbial colony counts quickly, allowing for corrective actions in real time. In addition to microbes, ATP measurements include organic matter such as food residue, which can sometimes lead to an appraisal of microbial presence on a surface that is overestimated. However, because ATP is not associated with matter of non-biological origin, organizations rely on ATP systems to help them meet vigorous cleanliness standards. By example, a 2012 study published in the American Journal of Infection Control indicated that ATP testing is an effective tool for monitoring sanitation in hospitals while the United Fresh Produce Association Food Safety & Technology Council has largely replaced microbiological testing with ATP testing procedures.