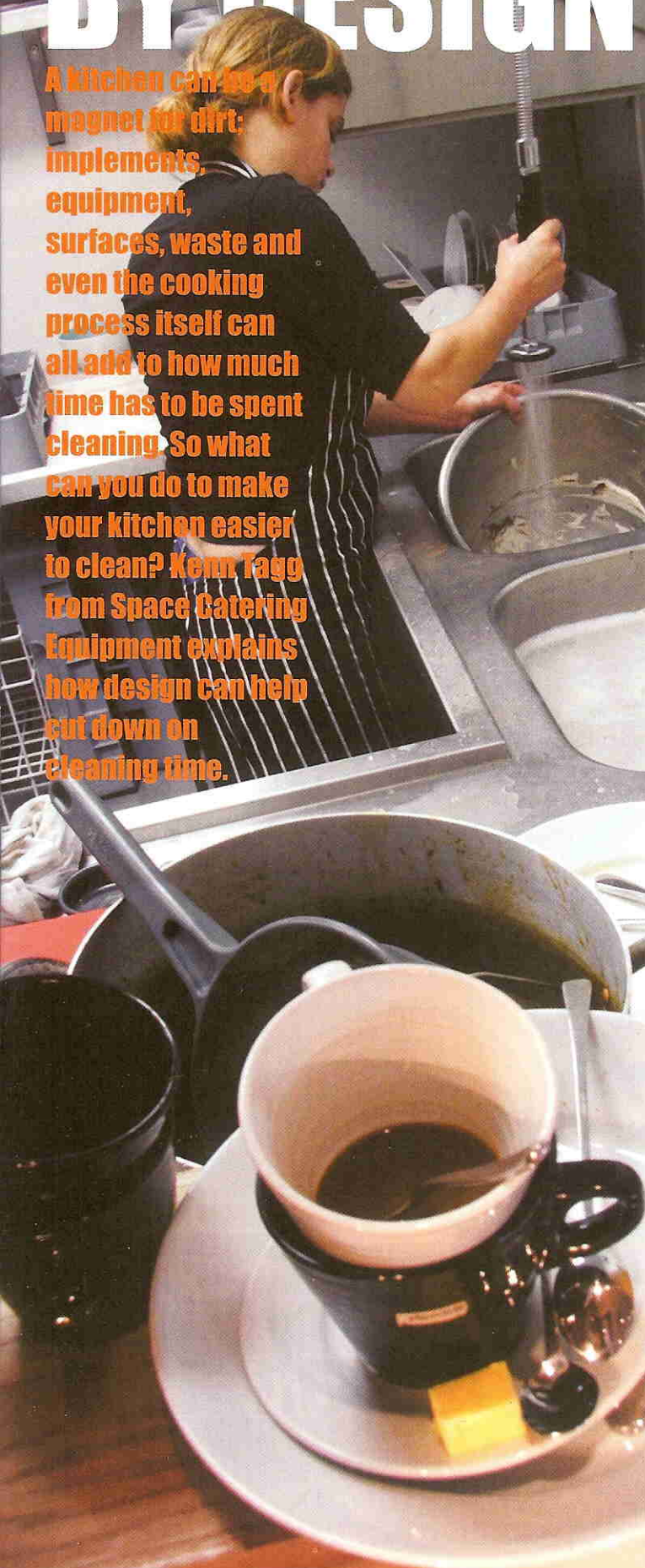


# CLEANLINESS BY DESIGN

**A kitchen can be a magnet for dirt: implements, equipment, surfaces, waste and even the cooking process itself can all add to how much time has to be spent cleaning. So what can you do to make your kitchen easier to clean? Kenn Tagg from Space Catering Equipment explains how design can help cut down on cleaning time.**



Whether you've got the luxury of having a new kitchen installed or not, there are still a number of things you can do in an existing commercial kitchen or catering environment to make cleaning more manageable. The first place to start is by thinking about the actual fabric of the room, working from the ground up. The floor obviously takes a lot of punishment in a kitchen, and yet with a bit of planning and choosing the right flooring materials, you can soon stay on top of the cleaning process more effectively.

These days, the majority of new floors we put down in kitchens tend to be a vinyl-welded sheet that is ridge-free and creates a really good, slip-resistant floor. Depending on how big and busy the kitchen is, it is also a good idea to install a floor gulley somewhere suitable as well. This means you can clean the floor with a deck scrubber to brush and squeeze the water straight into the gulley, much more practical than a traditional mop and bucket and having to wait for the floor to dry. Fitting a removable grate into the gulley also means the water can be strained to remove food or other waste, which is essential in helping to stop drains becoming blocked.

Secondly, you can also make the walls easier to clean by having them recovered in one of the various sheet claddings now available such as Altro White Rock or Interclad. These have the edge on traditional ceramic tiles which, though strong, are prone to cracking and mould formation on the grout.

Space is increasingly specifying sheet claddings with built-in Microban, which stops bacteria living on the surface. I would recommend that they are thermoformed right into corners to give a really cleanable, smooth surface.

The ceiling is another area where just a little planning goes a long way. A good rule of thumb is to apply a coat of washable paint or, better still, if there is a dropped ceiling, cover it in plastic faced plasterboard tiles which can be washed as often as needed and do not require ongoing maintenance and annual repainting.

## Choosing the right equipment

Putting the right kind of equipment into the kitchen also makes a big difference to how easy it is to keep clean. Space would always recommend – right down to the kitchen sink – or equipment on sturdy legs to allow operators to get brushes all the way under to clean. In larger kitchens, we are installing mobile sinks and dishwashing equipment fitted with Mechline QuickLink quick-disconnect systems, which are simply released by a pedal and moved away to allow the operator to clean even hard-to-reach areas behind. These are particularly suitable for sites with heightened hygiene awareness, as well as for helping to make routine and annual total kitchen deep cleaning regimes more effective on any site.

Cooking equipment also contributes to dirt build-up in a kitchen and again, Space always specify mobile appliances on extendable hoses fitted with quick release couplings to make it easy to pull the machine away from the wall for a daily brush down. Simple things like putting refrigeration on castors and combination ovens on stands, also help the operator to see and clean underneath. They also have the added bonus of being speedy to disconnect completely for a thorough once a month clean down.

As well as being able to move cooking equipment easily for cleaning, Space also fits practical stainless steel or PVC cladding on walls behind the cook line simply to facilitate an easy clean – on the basis that if they are easy to clean, they will get cleaned and cleaned properly.

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