



what's cool

Products that are smart, make your tasks easier and provide cost or labor savings

Bill Pregler

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AaquaTools High-Temperature/ High-Pressure HotCart

Sanitation is Rule No. 1



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Twin #40 propane tanks fuel the dual heat exchangers, which produce 185° F water. The compact HotCart is totally self-contained and moves easily throughout the cellar.

THANKS TO THE GROWING number of wine, beer and spirits facilities opening across North America, the **Unified Wine & Grape Symposium** is attracting a considerable number of new owners looking for the latest designs in production equipment. While I also tour the exhibit floors looking for “the new,” prior to the 2017 show I promised readers I would also walk the Unified floor looking for the time-tested, must-have equipment for any facility.

It was natural then to visit with **Robert Astle** and **Steve Buchan**, owners

of **AaquaTools, Inc.**, from Rancho Cordova, California. Included in their long list of quality cleaning equipment is their high-pressure/high-temperature washer, the self-contained and portable HotCart. Regardless of your thoughts about “new process” equipment, you will always have a need for sanitation.

The AaquaTools HotCart washer has always incorporated three of my basic “E”s: Effectiveness, Ease of Use and Ease of Maintenance.

Effectiveness

Buchan is considered the “design and idea” man at AaquaTools and Astle is the engineer/mechanic who assembles products to bring to market.

There are two things that immediately catch your attention. First is their choice of dual tankless, on-demand heat exchangers from **Noritz America Corporation**, which replace smelly, diesel-powered, steel tank-reservoir designs. Instead, Noritz exchangers use commercial grade, copper-alloy only. The exchangers have been around for a long time, and the HotCart uses the Model 1991 commercial units. Working together in parallel, they provide increased efficiency by stabilizing temperature fluctuations and boosting the flow rate.

The compact designs are 85 percent energy efficient and use propane as fuel, capable of producing 185° F water or 380,000 BTUs in mere seconds. Concurrently, there are two 40-pound (9-gallon) propane cylinders on board the HotCart, exactly like you would see on an RV. These exchangers come with full **American National Standards Institute** certification.

They have a built-in, digital touch-pad for easy and precise temperature control within (+/-) 2 degrees. Included are flame sensors, along with overheat and freeze protection—the latter is for those of you who live in the snow. Direct electronic ignition means no pilot light waste. They are both encased in durable stainless steel.

The next thing you see is an 8.8 horsepower on-board, high-pressure pump with a flow rate of 5.5 gallons per minute up to 2,750 psi. This is a serious amount of pressure but can easily be throttled down at either the wand handle or a dial on the pump housing.



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The temperature is controlled via a simple touchpad.



75 GALLONS
STAINLESS STEEL
TASTEFUL



LA GARDE

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The pump is from **Nilfisk/KEW**, which is another long-time industry standard with wide representation throughout the United States. What is unique is these pumps contain special seals in their construction, which allow for both high temperature and pressure to pass through the same pump simultaneously.

Ease of Use

I had a chance to visit with winemaker **Andrew Bilenkij** at **Ledson Winery** in Sonoma, California for a photo shoot and interview. For him, the HotCart is the cellar workhorse and is used constantly throughout all production cycles. In his mind, a major plus is the unit's simplicity and that anyone can quickly learn to operate it.

The cellar worker simply attaches the cold water source to the HotCart, turns the power on and selects the desired temperature on the touch pad. Cleaning begins instantly by pulling the trigger on the cleaning wand. With 185° F water and high pressure, it is easy for any novice to clean and sanitize anything in a cellar.

The custom, stainless steel HotCart rolls smoothly on four 8-inch solid rubber wheels, with two locking casters. The cleaning hose is 33 feet long, coiled on a hand-cranked reel (stainless steel) and incorporates a quick disconnect fitting proprietary to Nilfisk/KEW. AaquaTools specified these fittings because the effectiveness of the HotCart is its adaptability to a wide range of cleaning needs and accessories.

Part of the purchase is the cleaning "gun," or handle, which accommodates different length wands and nozzle heads for cleaning crushpad equipment or tanks, walls, drains and picking bins. The unit can also be used as the high heat/pressure source for your impingement barrel cleaning equipment, spray balls and after-market floor washers. The company refers to its design as "a driver of tools." What's Cool is the propane fueled burners are so clean and efficient that the low emission HotCart can be used in poorly ventilated work areas.

Ease of Maintenance

The HotCart is the result of mechanically oriented people who took quality, time-tested components from other industrial applications and assembled them into a terrific cleaning system for our industry. This means they started with a good understanding of what our sanitation needs are. Even better, the individual components are all "remove-and-replace," or rebuildable with certified (national) vendors or through AaquaTools themselves. I was told a winery can purchase necessary parts (via **FedEx** shipping) and easily perform the maintenance on site. Astle describes the design as intentionally "serviceman-friendly."

The HotCart requires three phase power, and the voltage is 220/480 V. All wiring in the heaters is of different sizes so as to avoid any wiring mistakes. Access doors and panels are all secured with easily disconnected clips. AaquaTools maintains a service department to assist in any emergency repairs. Factory warranties are held by AaquaTools and even extended on certain components. The KEW pump and the Noritz exchangers have a standard one-year warranty.

What's Cool: Sanitation is paramount for everyone in our business and will usually be achieved with a high-temperature/high-pressure washing system. Over the long term, the HotCart will be one of the best investments you can make and, as mentioned before, is effective, easy to use and low maintenance.

Tip: If you want to learn more about what and where needs sanitizing, you may want to purchase an affordable, handheld adenosine triphosphate "bug detector" from a company like **Hygiena** and swab your facility. **WBM**

For more information, visit www.AaquaTools.com.

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Steve Matthiasson
Premiere Viticulture &
Matthiasson Wines

‘Nuff said.

Bin to Bottle has earned its outstanding reputation by providing exemplary service and quality at a surprisingly affordable price. Contact us to learn about the myriad of alcohol adjustment, filtering and bottling services available. Of course all work is performed on equipment owned and operated by Bin to Bottle. We look forward to showing you how easy and convenient supplemental wine services can be.

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