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Eatery's food, air fresh thanks to firm's gear

Safety on four fronts

The Envirovision system, developed by RGF Environmental Inc. of Riviera Beach, uses ultraviolet light technology called Photohydroionization cells (PHI) to kill bacteria without using chemicals. How it works in four areas:

■ **Air:** PHI cells in the air-conditioning ducts and bathrooms prevent mold and kill bacteria. Another system traps airborne grease in the kitchen.

■ **Food:** A food sanitizer unit and vegetable washer help kill bacteria on food.

■ **Water:** A reverse osmosis water system provides bottled-quality drinking water.

■ **Ice:** PHI gas pumped into the ice maker prevents Listeria bacteria, which can cause food poisoning like symptoms.

By Alex Clifton, Palm Beach Post Staff Writer
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JUPITER -- At first sight, Molto Bene Ristorante is inviting. The framed art on the walls is for sale, the booths are cozy and the mismatched dishes give the 90-seat restaurant an eclectic flair.

But six months ago, owners Rick and Jennifer Orsi made a move that really sets this eatery apart -- even if customers can't see the changes.

The couple invested \$10,000 in equipment that cleans the air, purifies the water and sanitizes the food.

Rick Orsi says the decision to buy the new system was easy. With

heightened awareness of air and foodborne bacteria, news of even one sick customer could force him to close his 6-year-old business, he says.

"So many people touch your product before you even get it, and you can't see everything your employees do," Orsi says. "With this equipment, I hope it will compensate for any mistakes."

The system, called Envirovision, was developed by RGF Environmental Inc. of Riviera Beach. Molto Bene is the first restaurant in the nation to have the state-of-the-art system installed.

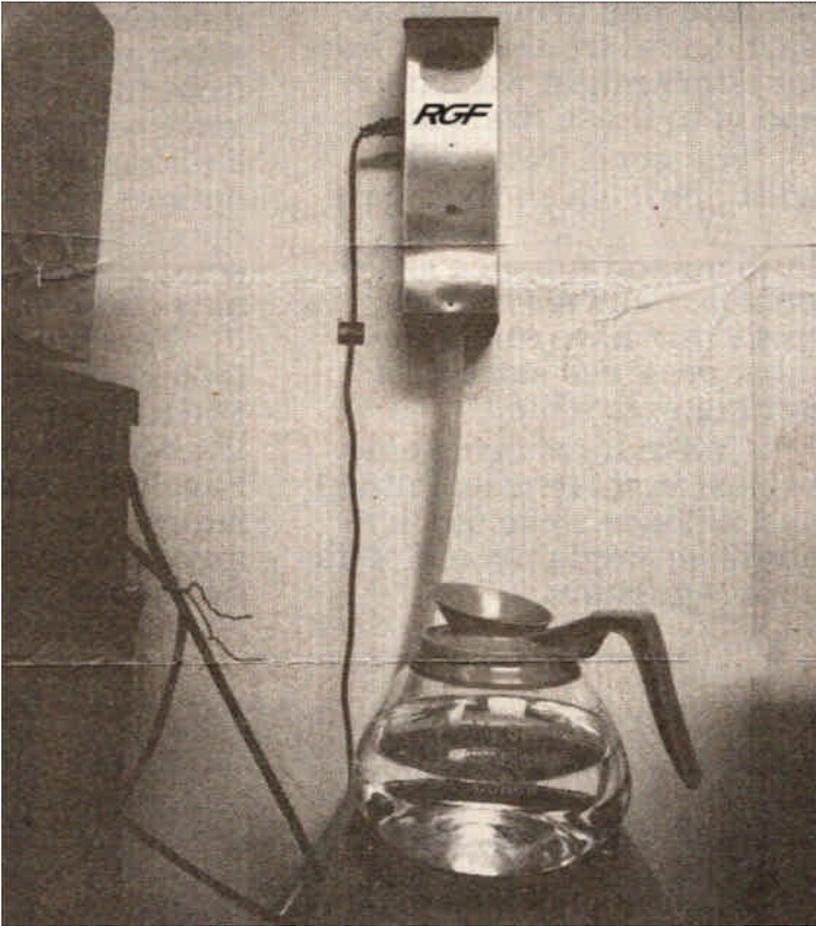
Using ultraviolet-light technology, the RGF Environmental's photohy-

'You can just tell the air is cleaner back here.'

RICK ORSI, owner, Molto Bene Ristorante in Jupiter



Food can be put in the bacteria-killing box to restauranteur Rick Orsi's left, while the unit above him cleans the air.



RGF Environmental's ice-maker sanitizer (above coffee pot) pumps gas into the machine (at left) to kill Listeria bacteria, which can live on ice

droionization, or PHI, cells are installed in the air-conditioning ducts to purify the air in the main dining room and bathrooms. A degreasing system above the kitchen door cuts down on grease and bacteria.

"It makes a big difference in the life of our equipment," Orsi says. "The filters don't get clogged as often, and you can just tell the air is cleaner back here."

Orsi considers the ice machine pump the most important piece of equipment in the system. Listeria is a type of bacteria that thrives on ice and can make customers sick with food-poisoning symptoms. It has been suspected in several cases where restaurant customers have become ill.

The Envirovision system pumps bacteria-killing PHI gas into the ice

maker to cut the risk of listeria by 95 percent, according to Gary Moody, a national RGF distributor.

RGF provides air, water and food sanitation and purification systems for food distributors around the world such as Kraft Foods, and is approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration.

"We've scaled down the same equipment to fit into smaller spaces such as Rick's restaurant," Moody says. "The the goal is chemical-free purification."

The air-purification system, for example, is the same technology the company sold to the Chinese government for that country's efforts to prevent spreading of the SARS virus on its crowded subway systems.

After successful testing at Molto Bene, RGF Environmental contracted with West Palm Beach restaurant-equipment wholesaler Regal Foodservice Equipment, Furnishings and Supplies to sell the system.

Regal Foodservice has clients in the hotel, cruise line and health care industries, as well as restaurants.

General Manager Jerry Culbertson says he's a customer of Molto Bene but didn't know the restaurant had installed the system until after he made a deal with RGF Environmental.



RGF manufactures over 500 environmental products.

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