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Chilean Subway Protected with Antimicrobial Copper

Copper's well-known antimicrobial properties are being harnessed by subway stations in Chile, where handrails made from a copper alloy have been installed to help lower the risk of infections spreading via these high-touch surfaces.

The new Santiago Bueras station is equipped with 350 metres of brass tube, each rail bearing the Antimicrobial Copper brand to verify it is capable of continuously killing bacteria, viruses and fungi that may settle on it. With normal cleaning, this equals less contamination and consequently less risk of the next hand touching the surface picking up pathogens.

With an estimated 6,500 daily users at the station, the handrails are likely to see heavy use. Brass was selected as an especially hard-wearing alloy that will offer a long service life.

Jorge Díaz, Chilean Undersecretary of Health, said: "Metro staff have explained to us that they have launched a healthcare campaign focused on the sanitisation of handrails in order to reduce the possibility of viruses and bacteria spreading."

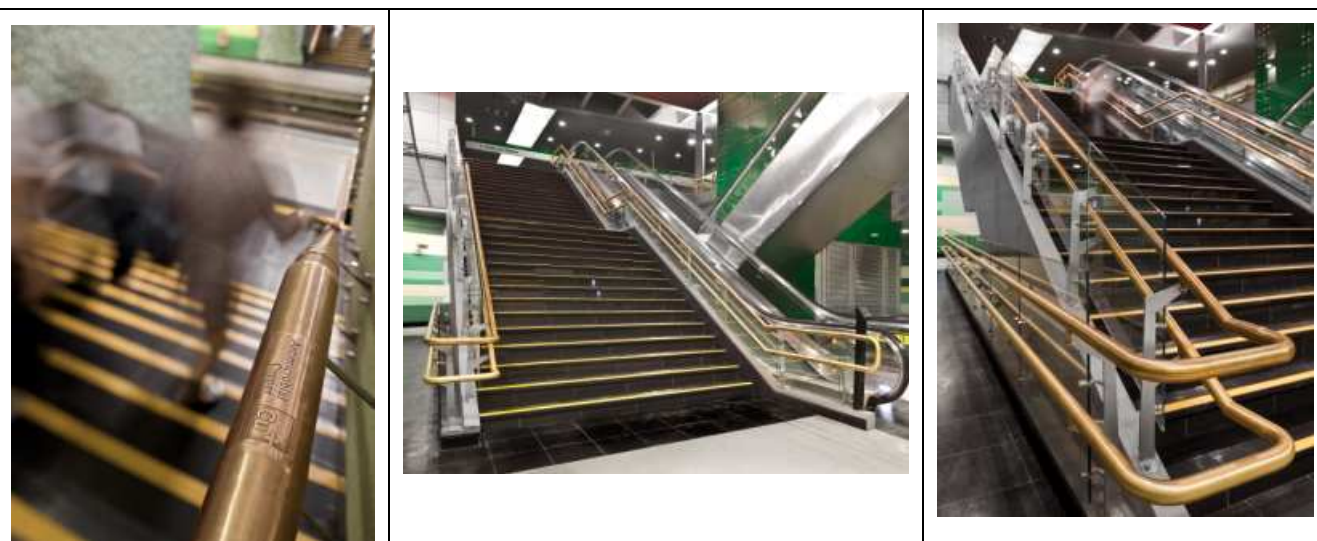
The expanding Chilean subway system is set to use a further 10,000 metres of the Antimicrobial Copper handrails, outfitting at least 30 stations. Additionally, Metro – the Chilean government's subway firm – are considering the replacement of stainless steel fittings in its older stations with Antimicrobial Copper.

As the world's largest copper producer, Chile has a profound connection to the metal that is also celebrated by the installation. Raphael Bergoeing, President of the Board of Directors of Metro Santiago, explained: "We are proud to be using a material so important in the life of all Chileans, enhancing knowledge of its ornamental use but, even better, emphasising its antimicrobial qualities, which contribute to the health of thousands of people every day."

Following the announcement of early results from a multi-site clinical trial in the US demonstrating that the use of antimicrobial copper surfaces in intensive care units resulted in a greater than 40% reduction in the risk of acquiring a hospital infection, interest in Antimicrobial Copper for frequently-touched surfaces outside the healthcare environment is growing.

In Beijing, China, Antimicrobial Copper-containing air conditioners have been installed on buses to investigate the improvement of air quality that can be obtained. Japan has two childcare centres equipped with Antimicrobial Copper surfaces, and in France a newly-opened combined carehome for children and the elderly also has Antimicrobial Copper handrails and door furniture.

For more information about copper's antimicrobial properties, and case studies of healthcare facilities around the world taking advantage of it, visit www.antimicrobialcopper.com.



Antimicrobial Copper handrails at Chile's Santiago Bueras station

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Note for Editors:

1. For more information on the US clinical trial, please [click here](#).