

Give Filtration Top Priority for Floor Cleaning Machines

Cleaning, restoration, remediation, and disaster recovery equipment is expensive. To keep your equipment running smoothly and efficiently, make sure the fluid remains clean and free from contamination. Make filtration a top priority in your operation.

Generally speaking, an area that most people don't really think about when it comes to their floor care equipment is filtration. It isn't necessarily negligence or carelessness. It is simply that it isn't foremost in a lot of minds. The fact of the matter is, filtration should be given top priority when it comes to floor cleaning machine maintenance.

If the filter breaks down or the filter becomes indexed, the system will break down. A motor and/or pump can be destroyed because

the filter was neglected to be serviced. Filters that aren't properly serviced can become so dirty the flow is restricted and will cause severe damage to the equipment. If there is too much resistance to flow, there will be considerable power loss resulting in inefficient and poor cleaning, or possibly no cleaning at all. Then you have to go to Plan B, and a lot of times, there is no Plan B.

Filters are inexpensive and well worth the investment you have put into your equipment. It could be the difference between poor job or a good job. In this economy, when everyone is concerned with getting the most "bang for the buck," a properly maintained machine with clean filters is a necessity every time a job is started. This does not just mean your liquid filters either. It also includes the air and blower filters.

There is a simple way to ensure that your cleaning equipment will not break down and become ineffective or even useless because of poor filtration. I call it "Don's 4 Easy Steps to Proper Filter Maintenance."



1. **Inspect all filters after each job.** Chances are they will need to be cleaned or replaced. If the filters can be cleaned, the first thing you should do before cleaning your filter is put on gloves to protect your hands. It is always good practice to wear eye protection, as well. Your filters are usually made of pleated stainless steel wire cloth with a perforated core. The connector end, where the threads are, is made of glass reinforced nylon. The filter is held together with industrial strength epoxy. To begin cleaning, use a soft bristle brush and your favorite cleaning solvent. You will not need a caustic or corrosive cleaning solvent which may harm your skin or possibly attack the epoxy and loosen it. You want to use a soft bristle brush because if bristles are too stiff, they will separate the wire strands which will cause the filter to lose its integrity. Because your system will break down if the filter breaks down, spend a few moments "getting to know" your filter. After feeling comfortable with the cleaning you have performed, be sure to thoroughly rinse the solvent off. Set the filter aside and let it dry.
2. **HINT! Removing lint from a filter.** Have you ever had problems getting lint out of a filter that you have struggled to clean? You know, the lint is caught between the wire cloth strands. Sometimes it is easier to pull teeth from the beak of a hen than it is pulling lint out of a filter. After you have cleaned the filter, rinsed it, and let it dry, try this easy method to remove the lint. Simply burn it off. It is that simple. Take a small torch or lighter, or even

matches, and hold it up to the lint and it will be disintegrated and just go away. It doesn't take much. This works every time. This does not come without warning, however.

- a. The filter MUST be thoroughly cleaned and rinsed of any solvent that was used in the cleaning process. A lot of solvents are flammable and an important safety measure is ensuring the filter has been rinsed thoroughly before drying.
 - b. When using a flame, make sure you prevent it from getting near the nylon cap and epoxy. Getting the flame too close to the epoxy and nylon end cap could result in loosening the adhesive or damaging the threaded connection. Keep the flame on the metal parts of the filter only.
3. **Blow it out!** After a thorough cleaning, the filter is dry, and all lint has been removed, take the air hose and gently blow the filter out. Remember to always practice safety first. Be careful of others who may be in the vicinity. Blow out the filter in the opposite direction the fluid flows. In other words, the perforated core is always on the downstream side of the filter so always blow it out from inside-out. This will loosen any sediments or contaminates that still may be in the filter. When you install the clean filter in your equipment, insure it is clean as a whistle.
4. **Does your equipment have a breather?** Some equipment has what is called, a "breather" installed on it. In tank mounts and other equipment, as the fluid level rises and falls inside the tank, it is necessary for air to fill the void in the head space of the machine. The air enters the machine from the outside environment. The air that enters the machine is not always clean air. All breathers have a filter inside. It needs to be serviced at times, too. Don't neglect it. If it becomes clogged, the pump and motor assembly will struggle to feed the cleaning equipment and possibly burn up. In order for equipment to work properly it needs to breathe just like you and I do.

If you are not sure if a filter needs replacing, replace it. Considering the investment made in the equipment, it is not worth the risk. Filters are inexpensive and well worth that investment. It could be much less costly to replace a filter than to attempt another cleaning with possibly a defective filter installed or one that may be past its useful life.

For the disaster recovery process, we also manufacture pipe-mounted suction screens. They have stainless steel wire cloth that is formed and epoxied into the same glass reinforced nylon connector ends as our suction strainers. Anywhere you need water or any fluid removed from an area where it shouldn't be, these are what you will want to use with your

removal equipment. They are easy to install on a hose or a pipe and are available in sizes up to 3" npt and in mesh sizes from 4 mesh to 200 mesh (74 microns).

When the application calls for a floor cleaning machine, in approximately 90%-95% of the time, the level of filtration required is either 60 mesh (250 microns) or 100 mesh (149 micron). That applies to both the fluids and the air where the blowers are used which are both installed in some equipment. Tank breathers can be anywhere from 10 microns to 40 microns. Because just about all cleaning fluids are water based, make sure you select filters that are all stainless steel with the nylon connector end. If the cores and end caps are plated steel, they will rust. Our suction strainers and pipe-mounted suction screens are stocked in various sizes and styles ready for delivery.

We at Ohio Fabricators understand what it takes to get the job done right. If your application or equipment requires a filter that is not standard, and you need custom filtration products, contact us anytime. We specialize in custom filters. We love helping our customers solve problems. We're good at it, and have been since 1945. The quality of work our design and engineering team performs rates second to none. Give us a call. We are ready to help.

