



Best Management Practices for Parts Cleaners

Introduction

Adopting best management practices (BMPs) for your solvent cleaning operations is a good approach to ensure regulatory compliance. BMPs are proven methods that not only lead to compliance, but help you stay there. The following BMPs serve as general recommendations for your solvent parts cleaning. For your convenience, the factsheet has been divided into three stages: 1) Preparation, 2) Operations, and 3) Disposal.

Preparation

- ⇒ Try “pre-cleaning” heavily soiled parts with a wire brush, paper towel or rag before using a solvent or water-based cleaning step.
- ⇒ Make sure you have a Safety Data Sheet (SDS), formerly known as a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS), for each solvent used. In your shop. These sheets can be obtained by your distributor or by the manufacturer.
- ⇒ Reconsider your need to use solvents to clean parts and seek less dangerous alternatives.
- ⇒ Contract with a solvent management company to supply and recycle solvent
- ⇒ Ask your supplier for the least hazardous solvent available for use.



Operations

- ⇒ Reduce the quantity of solvent used by implementing a two-stage cleaning system: 1) A “heavy dirt” station, and 2) a “light clean” station. The first stage should clean the dirtiest parts. The second stage uses cleaner solvent for final cleaning and rinsing. When the cleaning solution in the second stage is no longer effective, it can then be used to replace the solvent in the first stage. Fresh solvent is then used to replace the second stage.
- ⇒ Clean only parts that truly need cleaning.
- ⇒ Parts washers should have a re-circulating feature with built-in filtration to continuously remove dirt and contaminants. This will extend the life of the solvent.



- ⇒ Keep parts washers on an impervious surface (i.e., concrete) and clean parts over an impervious surface only. Use drip pans to catch spills.
- ⇒ Do not combine spent solvent with used oil or other fluids.
- ⇒ Keep spill control equipment nearby so solvent spills can be cleaned up immediately.

Disposal and Maintenance

- ⇒ Never clean parts in a sink that drains into a septic tank.
- ⇒ Never dispose of any spent solvents or cleaning fluids into drains, on the ground, in the regular trash, or by evaporating them to the air.
- ⇒ Drip racks or trays can help increase drainage from parts to minimize solvent loss.
- ⇒ Keep accurate records of solvent, wash water, sludge processing and disposal for a minimum of three (3) years.
- ⇒ When not in use, lids on parts washers must be kept closed to reduce evaporative solvent loss and ignitability.
- ⇒ Put hazardous warning signs on the solvent cleaning stations and identify what type of solvent is being used.
- ⇒ Ensure parts washer lids have a fusible link to comply with your local fire department rules and regulations.