

# Common Myth #4

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## It isn't necessary to clean extinguishers as part of the annual maintenance

### Description

**Yes it is. Consider these points:**

-Per NFPA 10, and Amerex service manuals, during annual maintenance, a thorough examination of the extinguisher must be performed.

- 7.3.2 requires an examination of all mechanical parts and physical appearance

- **7.3.2.4 Physical Appearance.** A visual examination of the extinguisher shall be made to detect obvious physical damage, corrosion, or nozzle blockage and to verify that the operating instructions are present, legible, and facing forward and that the HMIS information is present and legible.”

- If the extinguisher is covered in mud, dust, debris, grease or other things, how can you determine the condition of the mechanical parts, the condition of the cylinder, nameplate and other necessary labels, and thereby comply with NFPA 10 and the service manual?

- If the extinguisher is clean, it won't blend in with the background and is easier to find in an emergency.

-Periodic cleaning helps to remove dirt and moisture trapped in the dirt that can lead to corrosion, thus extending the life of the extinguisher.

-Cleaning makes it easier to read manufacturing dates, hydrotest dates, six year maintenance dates, serial numbers, bar codes, correct nozzles, correct parts, weather checking on hoses, proper labels, etc.

-Leaving an extinguisher cleaner than when you found it also lets the customer know that you were there and you did something. Many of your customers are not aware of the extensive maintenance that must be done when you service the extinguisher. All they see is the unit after you've left. If all they see is a new seal and a new tag on a dirty extinguisher they might feel slighted.

Think about it. If you had your car worked on, picked it up and paid the bill, but everything looked exactly the same, wouldn't you be just a little bit suspicious?

We are NOT suggesting that all you do is clean the unit. We've all heard enough stories about "rag & taggers." We are also not suggesting that you get out the polish and put a couple of hand rubbed coats on each extinguisher

(although there may be some environments where looks are so important that this could be a valuable service to that customer as well as extra protection from corrosion.) If you take just a little extra time to clean each one up, it could save time in the entire inspection, prevent you from missing some important information and leave you with a more satisfied customer. It could also make you and everyone else more safe by catching potential failures that could go unnoticed.

This will also help to set you and your company apart from others.