

DENTAL OFFICE WASTE MANAGEMENT



MAINTAINING AN AMALGAM SEPARATOR

- ✓ **Request operations and maintenance manuals from separator vendors before purchase** Maintenance requirements and schedules vary widely among separators. (*See chart on back for general maintenance information for City approved amalgam separators.*) Knowing this information up front will ensure the separator you choose will fit within the needs, capacities and constraints of your dental practice. As a general rule, the in-line systems require more frequent attention.
- ✓ **Ask your vendor for contact information of similar dental practices that have installed the same separator** _ Talking to other practitioners with the same separator will help you to understand the nuts and bolts of how to best maintain the separator.
- ✓ **Disinfect the separator equipment on a regular basis** _ Biological growth can impair separator performance, leading to an increase in your practice's mercury discharge. Recommended disinfection procedures will vary, with the amount and frequency of cleaning dependent upon the amount of biological material in the system, length of vacuum lines, and type of separator.

In all cases, NEVER USE BLEACH or other corrosive solutions!!

Some appropriate non-bleach line cleaners:

All-In-One	Stay-Clean	
E-Vac	Green and Clean	Super-Dent
Evacuation	MAXI-EVAC	Turbo Vac Line Flush
Cleaner	ProE-Vac	VacuCleanse
EZ-Zyme	Purevac	VAC-U-EZ
Gobble Plus	Sani-Treet Plus	

- ✓ **Inspect the separator weekly to ensure proper operation.** Look for warning signs- such as compromised suction power and noisy operation. A decrease in vacuum power can indicate improper installation or clogs in the line.
- ✓ **Clean and replace amalgam-containing elements.** Replacement schedules can vary from every month for multi-dentist practices to every few months for single-dentist practices. Contact your separator vendor for more specific information.

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✓ **Finally, amalgam separators must be operated at all times.**

Amalgam Separator	Suggested Maintenance
Guardian Amalgam Collector models, Air Techniques	Clean daily; replace collection container after one pound of waste collection (usually 6 months)
Amalgam Collector models, R&D Services	Adjust two external valves weekly; monitor liquid level and decant as needed to keep tubing 3 inches above sediment; add sterilant 2 - 3 times/week; remove sludge after 2 - 5 years depending on workload
ECO II, Pure Water Development	Apply cleaner daily (recommended); replace separator annually
REB models, Rebec Simple Solutions	Annual recycling should be scheduled with the manufacturer
Avprox AS-9, American Dental Accessories	Replace filter every 3 _ 8 months depending on workload
MSS models, Maximum Separation Systems	Replace settling tank annually; non-foaming cleanser (recommended)
ARU-10, Hygenitek	Apply cleanser daily; service plan: 6 month cycle; replace media filter canister: 6 months; replace sedimentation tanks: 6-24 months depending on workload
Hg 5, SolmeteX	Replace filter resin cartridge every 6 months
Merc II, Bio-Sum Medical	Replace unit annually
Rasch 890 models, AB Dental Trends	Replace canister every 18 months depending on workload
Bullfrog, Dental Recycling North America	Replace separator annually

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Source: McManus, Kevin R. *Purchasing, installing and operating dental amalgam separators.* JADA, Vol. 134, August 2003.