



# Collision Repair Center Best Practices

## Spraybooth Maintenance 101

Though the extent of your maintenance plan will depend on the design of your booth and the manufacturer's recommendations, a schedule for maintaining filters, fans and lighting should be a part of everyone's overall plan.

### Filters

No matter what kind of booth you have, air enters and exits your booth through filters - and gradually clogs them with dirt, dust and overspray. Filters play a key role in quality paint work, pay close attention to them. The best way to devise a filter maintenance program is to talk to your booth representative and to look at how the manufacturer's guidelines are affected by your shop's output and by the type of spray equipment you use. Then devise a regular filter-changing routine.

Most booths have three-stage filtration systems:

1. First, outside air is pulled in and goes through a pre-filter. In some cases, the booth has permanent grids from which the user replaces old filters with new ones.
2. After passing through the pre-filter, the pre-cleaned and heated air winds its way to the ceiling filter.
3. The third filter is the floor filter, which captures paint overspray. These require the most attention in a maintenance program. Your manufacturer may recommend changing the floor filters after so many hours of painting or so many panels have been painted.

Frequent replacement of intake filters will save money in heat and cut and polish labor time. The finish will dry faster, too. You should also take the extra time to make sure each filter is seated perfectly in its opening. If modifying the mounting frame, rubber weather-stripping the edges or duct taping them in place will keep the air passing through - rather than around - the filter, it's time well-spent.

You might also want to make it a habit to check your booth's pressure daily with a manometer, which will indicate when the intake filters are overloaded. Some

booths have a pressure switch that shuts off the air supply and exhaust fan when the intake filter gets clogged.

### Fans

Fans help flow the air through the filters to create booth pressure. They also accumulate gunk. Because dirty fan blades can lead to imbalance, vibration and possible bearing wear, clean your booth fans on a regular basis. If your exhaust fan wobbles from overspray buildup on the blades, take care of it before it does more serious damage to the unit. You should check fan-belt tension regularly. Fans and motors should turn easily by hand. While checking these components, use lockouts on the electrical panels. If you have ball-bearing motors equipped with grease fittings, they should be greased approximately once a month.

### Lighting

In a nutshell, all lights should be operational. Any weak or burned-out bulbs should be replaced immediately. A painter who can't see properly can't paint properly.

When replacing bulbs, keep in mind that you'll get more useful light from the more expensive bulbs. Color-corrected bulbs attempt to duplicate sunlight, under which the most accurate color matches are possible. If you elect to install color-corrected bulbs, make sure the illumination from them is equal to the ordinary bulbs being replaced. All lights installed in a spraybooth must meet the Uniform Building Code and any applicable local ordinances. Lighting fixtures covered with dirt and overspray will cause poor visibility and costly redos. Clean the covers as often as necessary to keep the booth in compliance and lit at its optimum level.

Setting up and following a regular maintenance schedule, will ensure better, faster work flow and keep your spraybooth in top shape.

