

Tech Tip, Cold weather

With a little planning ahead, you will be fully prepared for it. So with that said, I'd like to talk about winterizing your spray rig.

Generator

Check and/or change the anti-freeze in the radiator. Check for water in the fuel filter / water separator. Change the filter if it is close to time to service it. In colder climates, if your generator engine (diesel) is not already equipped with a block heater, it's something you might consider. It will make it easier to start and get the oil flowing quicker, reducing wear in the engine.

Compressor

Drain moisture from the compressor sump (rotary screw type compressors) on a regular basis. This will help to insure proper lubrication and avoid clogging of the coalesce filter. Hot weather is hard on lubricants, so if you are in doubt about the condition of the oil in your compressor, change it! Drain the moisture from the compressor tank (if so equipped) daily.

Air Dryer

Verify that your refrigerated air dryer is purging moisture from the trap as it should. Most air dryers need to be serviced annually, so if yours is due for service or getting close, I'd recommend that you go ahead and do it.

Air system auto-lube (mist oiler)

Verify that your mist oiler has an adequate supply of oil and is working properly. This will help to prevent freezing up of you agitator and transfer pumps.

Proportioner Auto-lube system (TSL)

Clean out the lube bottle, check valve(s), hoses, and lube cylinder (wet cup). After doing this, run the proportioner for a day or so and change the TSL again. This will help insure that all moisture has been removed from this system, then change the TSL on a regular basis.

Band heaters

If you do not already have band or blanket heaters for your drums, I would recommend that you get them. These will help you get your material up to temperature quicker in the morning and help to maintain the drum temperature during the day. This will help to maintain yield per drum set on open cell foam. NEVER use band heaters on closed cell foam as this will cause frothing of the B side material! If you already have band heaters, get them out and check them to make sure that they work properly, before you really need them.

Personally, I don't recommend band heaters to maintain drum temperature overnight. If you aren't careful they can cook the material in the drum which will ruin that particular drum of material. I think the use of a small electric space heater to maintain a warm environment in the rig is preferable, then use the band heaters once you get to the job site.

Heated whip hose

If you have been spraying with an un-heated whip, (or a standard heated whip on which you have by-passed the heat circuit due to a bad heating element), you will likely need to replace the whip hose. You can get by with an un-heated whip in the summer time, but in the winter an un-heated whip can affect your spray pattern and yield. We are running a special on heated whips this month to help you with this.

Proportioner temperature settings

In colder conditions, you will need to set the temperature set points a little higher to get the same density and yield as what you were getting in the summer. Foam is very temperature sensitive and when you are spraying in colder ambient conditions and on a colder substrate, you will need to compensate for those conditions.