

## PRESSURE WASHER MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

The useful life of cleaning tools and supplies (excluding solutions and cleansers) depends on the quality and design of the products being used, how the products are used and how well the tools are maintained. By following these hints the custodial technician can extend the useful life of many of the tools and supplies used in his/her work.

Pressure washers can be used to clean a variety of surfaces, but they require regular cleaning of the housing unit, as well as inspection of cords and plugs if they are electric powered. Mechanics should tune up the engines on gas-powered pressure washers according to manufacturer recommendations, check fluid levels such as oil daily, and changed them when necessary.

- Equipment operators should regularly check cords to make sure insulation is undamaged and wires aren't exposed. If a cord's insulation is damaged, replace the cord with a new one of sufficient amperage. Plugs with damaged prongs should be replaced so the machine receives the proper current connection and that wires aren't exposed.
- Wheels should be oiled periodically or greased, if a grease fitting is available.
- Operators should check electric motor brushes annually for wear and replaced if necessary. This step can add years of life to a motor and stretch the investment in capital equipment.
- Mechanics should lubricate grease fittings periodically and check wheels, hinges and other moving parts for adjustment and wear.
- Pressure washers can be damaged from careless operation and from transporting between sites. Operators need to anticipate



objects and possible obstructions when operating and transporting these machines to avoid damage to equipment, walls and furniture.

- Operators should repair or replace wands, which can become kinked or bent and leak. Plugged nozzles need to be cleaned out, but mechanics should be careful when cleaning jet holes so they are not widened or changed in size, as this can damage the effectiveness of the spray pattern. It is a good idea to have extra nozzles available in case older ones are damaged.
- Regardless of the type of pressure washer, managers should ensure that maintenance is done in accordance with manufacturer recommendations, and they should keep maintenance records filed for easy reference when necessary. This step gives maintenance personnel a reference when scheduling future maintenance, it can be important in complying with warranty requirements, and in the event of an equipment-related accident, documentation is available to verify that proper and periodic maintenance has been performed.
- Maintaining facilities' equipment will promote safety, improve productivity, and add years of life to capital equipment investments. And they all are very helpful tools in stretching those tight department budgets.