EQUIPMENT PRESERVATION (FIRST AID)

Regenisys Limited
Unit G, 20 Cain Road
PO Box 12 498
Penrose
Auckland
P +64 9 579 0321
F +64 9 579 0323
admin@regenisys.co.nz
www.regenisys.co.nz

Immediately following a contamination occurrence, it is essential to stabilise the condition of affected equipment, and the environment within which the equipment is stored in order to minimise the risk of further contamination or damage from occurring.

1. Never switch on contaminated equipment before it has been checked and certified by a competent qualified technician.
2. Beware of equipment representatives who attempt to prove equipment is damaged beyond economical repair by switching it on to verify that it is non functional. Any short circuit damage that occurs as a result of the equipment being switched on prior to decontamination is directly attributable to the person who switches the equipment on and is not generally a consequence of the event that caused the contamination. If the equipment is properly decontaminated and dried prior to being switched on, then short circuit damage will not occur.
3. Exercise caution when moving equipment from one area to another. Primarily to avoid unnecessary physical damage but also to prevent damage to any delicate electromechanical components that may be present inside specialist equipment.

Check List (Fire Contamination)

- Switch off and unplug all equipment, remove batteries from laptops and disconnect any back up batteries (UPS). If possible, isolate the power supply to the affected area at the power distribution panel or switchboard.
- Allow smoke to escape by opening vents, windows and doors, where practical fans can speed up the process. Ensure undamaged building areas are not contaminated by vented smoke.
- Physically remove any excess water using the most efficient method (squeegee, mop, wet & dry vacuum etc) and remove all wet objects from the affected area, floor coverings, soft furnishings, drapes etc. Check for water under raised floors and within HVAC and electrical/telecommunications ducting. If suspended ceilings are present, cover all equipment with plastic sheeting before removing ceiling tiles so as to prevent additional contamination from trapped water, remove wet insulation material.
- Where practical, use dehumidifiers or the building air conditioning to lower relative humidity within the rooms containing affected equipment to less than 45%. This will significantly reduce the rate of corrosion and greatly improve the recovery success rate.
- Establish protocols[1] that prevent additional contamination from entering the affected area and contamination from within the affected area being spread to undamaged areas.
- In the event of building restoration/demolition being undertaken prior to the removal of the affected equipment. Then consideration should be given to relocating the equipment to another area. Otherwise, protect equipment using plastic or fabric sheets and run dehumidifiers under the covers.

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[1] A protocol is any method employed to prevent an accidental occurrence, it could be as simple as locking the affected room and ensuring that only 1 person has control of the key. Or as extreme as removing the plug from an appliances power cable so as to prevent it being plugged back in and inadvertently activated.

Check List (Water Contamination)

- Switch off and unplug all equipment, remove batteries from laptops and disconnect any back up batteries (UPS). If possible, isolate the power supply to the affected area at the power distribution panel or switchboard.
- Physically remove any excess water using the most efficient method (squeegee, mop, wet & dry vacuum etc) and remove all wet objects, floor coverings, soft furnishings, drapes etc from the room. Check for water under raised floors and within HVAC and electrical or telecommunications ducting. If suspended ceilings are present, cover all equipment with plastic sheeting before removing ceiling tiles so as to prevent additional contamination from trapped water.
- If possible, have qualified personnel open equipment cabinets and remove as much residual water as possible. Leave the cabinets open while running dehumidifiers in the affected rooms. Warm dry air up to 60^{o}C can be added to the area to speed up the drying process, do not direct hot air directly at equipment.
- Open spare parts storage cupboards, remove excess water and arrange the contents so that air can circulate.
- Where practical, use dehumidifiers or the building air conditioning to lower relative humidity within the rooms containing affected equipment to less than 45%. This will significantly reduce the rate of corrosion and greatly improve the recovery success rate.

Check List (Contamination by Dust or Fire-Extinguishing Powder)

- Immediately switch off all dust sensitive equipment, then unplug from the power source and disconnect any back up batteries (UPS). If possible, isolate the power supply to the affected area at the power distribution panel. If it is not practical to isolate at the distribution board, then establish protocols to ensure the equipment is not accidentally reactivated.
- Do not operate the equipment as dust can significantly reduce the effectiveness of heat exchange devices and can readily cause overheating and/or abrasion of moving parts.
- Eliminate the source of dust, or seal the room completely against entry of any additional dust. Establish protocols to prevent further contamination.
- When damage is caused by fire extinguishing powder, ensure that surrounding areas are maintained in a dry condition until the contamination can be removed.
- In the event that it is absolutely necessary to reactivate a unit prior to recovery being undertaken. Then as a minimum precaution, vacuum the equipment thoroughly, being careful to avoid causing damage from the static generated by the vacuuming process and replace any air filters installed on the equipment with new units. Check all filters daily and replace then as required.