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## **Air Compressors the Forgotten Heart of Your Dry Pipe Sprinkler System**

As you may know, the installation and maintenance of an air compressor is a fairly simple project. However, when executed improperly installation and preventive maintenance can become a labor intensive and costly nightmare.

The problem is that installing an air compressor is so simple that they are usually not double-checked. After the installation, the compressor is forgotten - until it stops working.

The tricky thing about air compressors is that if they stop working they do it at the most inconceivably inconvenient time. This means that you end up paying someone a weekend / holiday / overtime rate to drive to the job site and spend three hours going over the system top to bottom only to find that the compressor has seized. Or worse, you get a phone call at 3:00am on a Sunday morning to hear "I don't know boss. The compressor must have broke." All for a \$2.00 quart of oil.

The installation and maintenance of an air compressor is fairly simple. There are a few basic things that you can do to increase the life of your air compressor and prevent a costly system shutdown. The hardest part is remembering to do them...

### **INSTALLATION**

- The most common problems when installing an air compressor are electrical. Make sure that you have a qualified electrician ready to do the job.
- When hooking up the compressor to its power supply, be sure that you are using the proper gauge wire for the distance of the run and the size of the compressor.
- When testing, make sure to put the voltage meter up to the compressor when it is running. Many times a compressor is tested while it is off. This produces an inaccurate reading, as there is no resistance in the line.
- For the best installation of any compressor, include a flex line on the discharge and vibration pads. Minimizing vibration will increase the life of your compressor and reduce the risk of fittings coming loose.

By taking these simple steps when installing an air compressor you can be sure to get the heart of the dry pipe system off to a flawless start.

## **MAINTENANCE**

- Check the oil level of your lubricated air compressor at least once a month. Think of it like your car no oil = seized engine.
- Clean all filter elements. In particularly dirty areas clean the filters weekly, otherwise monthly will do.
- Drain any condensate from the receiver and traps. This will ensure that water stays out of the compressor and the system.
- Check for unusual noise or vibration. These sounds could be telling you that nuts and cap screws are getting loose. Tighten as needed.
- At least once per quarter, change the oil.

By following through with these proper installation and preventive maintenance instructions you can make your compressor last many years. Furthermore you can reduce the risk of an unwanted future expense and a nightmarish 3:00am wakeup call.

The final thing to remember, most problems with air compressors can be solved over the phone. If you are unsure about any installation or maintenance step call the manufacturer immediately. Any good manufacturer is an expert in their product, as well as customer service. You are paying for both when you buy the compressor take advantage of it.

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