

Effective Maintenance Tips for Cannabis Extraction Gear

Ensuring Optimal Performance and Yield through Proper Maintenance

Regular cleaning and maintenance of cannabis extraction equipment are essential to ensure optimal performance and yield. Here are the top six tips to help you develop effective cleaning and maintenance protocols for your cannabis extraction equipment.

Identify Key Components of Your Extractor

To begin, identify the key components that make up your extractor. These likely include:

- Extraction and separator vessels
- Solvent supply tanks
- Lines and connections
- Temperature controllers/chillers
- Compressor pumps

Familiarize yourself with each component and understand how they work together to perform the extraction. This knowledge will help you identify unique parts within each component that become dirty or worn during use and will need periodic cleaning or replacement. Understanding the system will also aid in troubleshooting should any problems arise.

Determine Cleaning and Maintenance Needs

To keep your extraction system running properly and avoid downtime, determine what cleaning and maintenance need to be performed and when. Much of this information can be found in the user manual for your extractor, including recommendations on timing. However, differences in run parameters can impact wear and tear, so it is best to closely monitor your equipment and set a schedule based on your specific needs.

Regular cleaning of your extraction system is critical for optimal performance. Don't cut corners—perform all cleaning procedures to meet or exceed manufacturer's recommendations. Common cleaning procedures include:

- Performing extraction runs with no cannabis present
- Rinsing separator vessels and connecting lines with ethanol
- Checking downstream lines/filters for carryover of cannabis extract

Proper cleaning will minimize the occurrence of many common problems, including clogged lines/valves, poor separation, and low yield. If you use the same extractor to run multiple strains (e.g., high CBD strains and high THC strains), it is best to thoroughly clean in between extraction runs to minimize cross-

contamination.

Maintenance Protocols

Scheduled maintenance is also very important. For example, maintenance of a CO₂ gas compressor pump includes:

- Weekly: Check and record oil level and running oil pressure. Note changes in noise level or vibration while running, as this could indicate a potential problem.
- Monthly: Inspect the pump for any loose connections and/or leaks, and check the belt tension.
- Every six months: Change the oil filter.
- Every 18 months: Replace the diaphragm.

These activities will ensure that the compressor pump operates reliably and minimizes downtime.

Set a Schedule and Keep a Maintenance Log

Once you identify what needs to be done and when, create a maintenance calendar for each extraction system you're running so you know when routine maintenance should be performed. Ensure each extractor has its own logbook, and document all maintenance activities for easy reference. This will help track performance over time and identify recurring issues.

Keep a Supply of Replacement Parts and Consumables

Anticipate maintenance needs by keeping a supply of replacement parts and consumables on hand. Parts that may become worn or break over time include:

- Valves
- Belts
- O-rings

Consumables may include:

- Filters
- Oil
- Coolant

Keeping these materials in-house allows for quick repairs and minimizes extractor downtime. Maintain an inventory log of spare parts and replenish as needed.

Train Staff on Proper Cleaning and Maintenance Procedures

It's crucial to train all staff involved in the extraction process on proper cleaning and maintenance procedures. This includes:

- Understanding the importance of regular maintenance
- Following manufacturer's recommendations
- Knowing how to perform routine checks and identify issues

Proper training ensures consistency and helps prevent equipment damage due to improper handling.

Regularly Review and Update Maintenance Protocols

As the cannabis extraction industry evolves, so do the technologies and best practices. Regularly review and update your maintenance protocols to incorporate new information and techniques. Stay informed about industry trends and manufacturer updates to ensure your equipment remains in optimal condition.

Maintaining cannabis extraction equipment is a continuous process that requires attention to detail and a proactive approach. By identifying key components, determining specific cleaning and maintenance needs, setting a schedule, keeping a supply of replacement parts, training staff, and regularly updating protocols, you can ensure your extraction system operates efficiently and yields the best results.

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