

KEEPING YOUR VEHICLES CLEAN

Myths of Soft Touch vs Touchless Washing



BY JACK JACKSON

Questions still continue in the industry on what is the best method to wash a vehicle. Brushes scratch and a touchless wash doesn't clean the film off vehicles. Those are the two myths most believe, both are somewhat true when you are not optimizing the equipment or the proper methods to maximize results. It is the his-

tory of neglect by owners of the machinery that keep these myths alive.

Let's discuss brushes first. Soft touch brushing of vehicles through the proper method in today's world is not an issue. Brushes have come a long way from the old days. Lamb skin, foam, and cruciform polyethylene are a few of the materials used today that have dispelled the old myth of brushing cars.

Utilizing a proper brush on an automatic spinning or jiggling cylinder will reduce the amount of chemicals required to wash a vehicle. Most people don't realize it, but the chemical or soap actually keeps the brushes clean as well as assisting in the removal of dirt from vehicles. Many people don't realize the

importance of the proper soap to ensure maximum performance. In addition, most machine brushes must be replaced regularly to ensure the structure and length are correct for maximum cleaning.

Another typical oversight by most operators is allowing worn out brushes to clean vehicles. Once the structure or length of the brush is compromised, the quality of the wash is compromised as well. It's the same as trying to sweep with a worn out broom, there will be streaks and lines of dirt left behind.

We have been selling brush machines for a long time and have heard of every issue there could be with brush problems. It always comes down to the two same issues: 1. Worn

out brushes. 2. Improper use of chemicals/soap.

We have been selling both polyethylene and foam brushes for 20 years. To give you an example, our polyethylene brushes will last 20,000 washes and our foam brushes will last 40,000 washes. That is all dependent on what you are washing as well. If you wash flat surfaces, your brushes can last even longer. Using the proper soap will add time to your brushes by increasing the lubricity and removing the grime.

Touchless washing of vehicles is a much more complicated initiative. There is a reliance on proper spraying of water, temperature, positioning of vehicle, positioning of water nozzles, chemical composition and dwell time to achieve optimum results. Neglecting any one of these in whole or part will result in poor

quality of washing.

Many don't pay attention to the maintenance of the machinery or may use the least amount of chemicals or least expensive ones to achieve results that are believed to be as good as the original setup from the manufacturer. Most times the wash bay is out of sight, out of mind, and gets little attention until it breaks. This is most unfortunate because these breakdowns are costly on both fronts - the emergency call to the manufacturer to fix the machine and the loss of vehicle cleaning during the downtime period.

Visit your wash bay periodically to see what is happening with the machinery. You will be surprised at the results when you ensure that proper maintenance, chemicals and brushes are all working together to achieve fabulous results. No ma-

chine is a miracle worker, at least until the day when all vehicles are the same and someone has built the perfect washing system that cleans every nook and cranny of our vehicles.

To compromise on minor cleaning is acceptable, but to pay for excessive dirt residue left on the vehicle with streaks caused by neglect is not the right way to do business. Call your expert now and get your cleaning optimized.

For those companies that utilize a 3rd party company to pressure wash vehicles in the parking lot, we have a host of other issues to discuss in next month's column.

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