SPECTROLINE®
HVAC/R

CLEANING FLUORESCENT LEAK DETECTION DYE SPILLS

TECHNICAL BULLETIN #194

Most fluorescent dye spills occur when a service port of a pressurized AC&R system charged with dye is accessed, resulting in a forcible spray of dye. Incomplete connection to the service port and/or injecting fluorescent dyes into systems with damaged or out-of-specification service ports may also result in dye spills.

HINTS AND TIPS

The best cure is prevention. Work neatly and do your best to avoid dye spills or sprays in the first place.

Always cover the service port connection with a rag when connecting or disconnecting dye injection devices. This way any dye spray will be kept to the access fittings where it can be easily managed.

React quickly. The quicker that the mess is cleaned up, the smaller it will be. Older stains can be very difficult to remove, especially on porous, painted, or plastic materials.

Only use rags to absorb cleaners used in the dye clean ups. They work much better than paper towels.

Always wear disposable latex gloves when working with fluorescent dyes. Discard gloves immediately after each use.

Dye stains on hands can be easily removed with any waterless hand cleaner. One helpful tip when using these cleaners is to first apply them to hands or skin, rub them in vigorously, then wipe off the residue with a paper towel or rag. Do not rinse with water after the first application; wiping off first removes dye better and prevents spreading. Following up with additional waterless cleaner or soap, both with a water rinse will complete the job. Any remaining skin staining should wear off and fade after a day or two.

SOLVENT CLEANERS

Several types of readily available solvent cleaners will work well on removing fluorescent dye spills from most surfaces however several factors will contribute to their effectiveness, including the spill size, type of material stained, and length of time before cleaned. Solvent cleaners yielding the best results are:

GOOD

- Goof-Off
- Mineral spirits (paint thinner)
- Penetrating oil (spray can)

BETTER

- WD-40 (spray can)
- Isopropyl alcohol (spray can)

BEST

- Non-chlorinated automotive brake cleaner (spray can)

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