

Top 10 Common Mistakes to Avoid with Automated Washing

| Common Mistakes | Result | Solution |
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| 1. Using hot water in pre-wash phase when cleaning protein-based soil | Soil is cooked on surfaces, making it more difficult to remove during subsequent wash phase. | Select cold water for the pre-wash phase. |
| 2. Use cold or hot tap water in wash phase when cleaning oily or grease/fat type soils | Soil is not removed from surfaces or an extremely long cycle time is required. | Select hot water for the pre-wash and wash phases. |
| 3. Washing with water temperature outside of the operating range of the chemicals being used | Soil is not removed from surfaces or an extremely long cycle time is required. | Check operation range on chemical container labels and adjust temperature accordingly. |
| 4. Performing final rinse with cold water | Very long drying time. | Adjust temperature of the final rinse phase as high as possible. |
| 5. Using chemical(s) with the wrong pH | Very long wash time or improper cleaning. | Use alkaline chemicals for protein and organic soils & use acidic chemicals for inorganic mineral-based soils. |
| 6. Using chemistries that create foam in the chamber | Foam creates cavitation in the pump, resulting in lower pressure and possible damage to the pump. The presence of foam can also increase rinse water volume needed, as well as cause issues with sensors and probe readings. | Use chemicals and wash temperatures recommended by manufacturer, or non-foaming detergents. |
| 7. Setting long time for rinse phases | Longer total cycle time. | If rinse water is recirculated, increasing time does not improve rinsing efficiency. It is recommended to shorten rinse time and add rinse phases if required. |
| 8. Setting high temperature for all rinse phases | Longer total cycle time. | Reducing temperature shortens rinse phases and reduces stress for equipment. However, the final rinse should be heated to accelerate drying. |
| 9. Using low quality water for all phases | Pool cleaning performance, mineral deposits & high detergent usage. | Use filtered mineral free water. |
| 10. Positioning load items incorrectly & overloading baskets & accessories | Inadequate coverage and poor cleaning performance and results. | Follow washer supplier's recommendations for positioning of components on accessories and avoid overloading and overlap of items. Repeat cycles if needed. |

References: <https://www.sterislifesciences.com/resources/documents/article-reprints/automated-washing-principles-and-common-mistakes>