

TECHNICAL *Corner*



Preventative Maintenance Before & During Summer

By Wayne Kochanek, ACS Enterprises, Inc.

Summer cometh and the smell of popcorn will soon fill the air. The time for concession maintenance is now. Let's face it, a popper, drink tower or any other vital piece of concession equipment will most likely falter... on the weekend, during the film that's about to shatter a box office record. Ouch! Now is the time to prepare. At ACS Enterprises, we like to call pre-summer the "Scheduling Your Breakdown Month" by having a trained technician discover your problem now rather than your concession crew on a Saturday night.

A detailed evaluation performed by a qualified maintenance\repair company before summer can more than pay for itself. Consider the loss of revenue from one popper sitting idle due to a \$20 part about to fail. Point taken? Good.

Here are some simple tips and checks which if performed by your facility manager could make a world of difference during the summer months.

- Get your equipment clean... we mean SUPER CLEAN! Believe it or not, spending time detailing your equipment leads to discovery. You'll recognize damaged parts, dirty filters, dusty condensers and dried oil hoses. You may even find that missing retainer clip you thought a patron ate six months ago.
- Fire up those dormant machines. Chances are you'll be using that lonely warmer or forgotten hot dog grill sitting idle on the back bar. Take note of its working condition.
- Where is that clip? It's difficult for your service company to get a weekend emergency call due to a missing retainer clip or simple kettle cover nut. Paying a technician emergency rates for a 30 second repair is probably not your idea of money well spent. You may want to list

the common parts to have on hand, buy a nice holding container for them and keep it readily available. Limit staff access, you know what I'm talking about. Stock these "magically disappearing clips" now and avoid paying overnight shipping later.

- Stay on top of it. Implement a regular check strategy. For some theatres it's a daily procedure, for others weekly, bi-weekly. During this time note the general operating condition, equipments cleanliness, expendable parts, any strange sounds. Listen to your staff, they use the equipment daily. Set up a dry erase board for them to jot down any problems they have with the equipment. Follow up is important.
- Train and Re-Train your staff. When possible... during a rush, take a quick second to note the staff's treatment of the equipment. Bad habits or shortcuts have a way of becoming the norm.
- Above all else – Proper operating procedures need to be followed. They extend the life of your equipment, protect warranties, and keep everyone safe!

Following these tips will help you take a fresh look at your concession operations, however; the true benefit you can provide your patrons is to schedule that breakdown with a certified technician reviewing your equipment and procedures. Remember; take charge of your equipment. ▼

Wayne Kochanek is Director of Facility Development for ACS Enterprises, a full service cinema service provider. Prior to ACS, Wayne was Facilities and Maintenance Manager for AMC Theatres for 13 years. For additional information, please visit www.acs-ent.com or email Wayne at concession@asc-ent.com.

Any questions or topic ideas for Technical Corner can be submitted to Office@NATOCalNev.org