### **MEIKO** Protect



## BEHIND EVERY MASK IS A PERSON

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# CLEANING BA MASKS: machine vs. manual cleaning

Firefighters usually clean BA equipment by hand, but new warewashing technology is proving a better option.

With the **TopClean Series from Meiko** the process is quicker, costs less – and most of all, is more hygienic.

When on duty, firefighters have to rely completely on their colleagues and their equipment. In Germany they refer to the "safety chain" defined as...

The safety chain combines all actions, methods, tactics, equipment and appliances associated with the safe use of respiratory protection

The safety chain includes all the safety philosophy associated with respiratory protection during preparation for **deployment**, **deployment itself and postprocessing.** Breaking the safety chain can put the life of the person wearing respiratory protection equipment at risk. The **postprocessing** referred to, includes the **cleaning of respiratory protective** 



equipment.

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#### **Removing error**

Manual cleaning is prone to error: incorrect dosing of the chemicals used, insufficient wetting of products, not enough application time – or too much application time, if you get distracted by another task in the middle of manual cleaning.

This is exactly what happened at one fire service. The results: the BA masks were left in the cleaning bath much longer than they should have been. The rubber parts of the mask dissolved, risking failure and causing black marks on the firefighters' faces the next time they used them.

- Something like this cannot happen with the TopClean: all of the parameters associated with the cleaning process (time, chemicals, mechanics, temperature) are predefined and run reliably.
- Integrated door locking ensures the washing processes cannot be interrupted once the start button has been pressed.
- A built-in empty indicator ensures that cleaning cannot commence without sufficient chemicals.



According to the expert opinion of Prof. Walter Popp, Head of Hospital Hygiene at Essen University Hospital, following intensive testing, the 'TopClean M delivers good cleaning and disinfection performance. As a general rule it is preferable to use a machine rather than manual methods to clean BA masks.'



#### **User safety**

If **manual cleaning** is not carried out under the correct conditions, users can be put at an even greater disadvantage: cleaning vapours can be inhaled, chemicals can damage the skin and contaminated PPE can even harm those it is designed to protect.

By contrast, **machine cleaning** is completed in a closed system, i.e. inside the TopClean M. What this means above all, is more safety and security for users, as they do not come into direct contact with the cleaning chemicals.

#### Saving time

Another disadvantage of manual disinfection, is that **it takes up the valuable capacities** of respiratory protective equipment technicians

 in particular when they are charged with removing all traces of chemicals from the equipment they are tasked with cleaning.

If it takes an average of 4.5 hours to complete the cleaning and disinfection process manually for 4 BA masks, using **TopClean can reduce this time by 60%**.

All the technician has to do, is to take the BA masks apart, place them into the baskets and subsequently put them back together and carry out standard checks. **TopClean M** does the rest, with programme cycle times of between **6 and 10 minutes**.

- Up to 4 BA masks can be cleaned and disinfected simultaneously...
- Or 8 regulators...
- Or 4 BA masks and 4 regulators

"Our previous manual process was reliable, of course. But the TopClean M and machine cleaning takes things to a whole new level, by giving us a much more consistent and reliable process."

Thomas Happersberger, Commander of Lahr City Fire Service





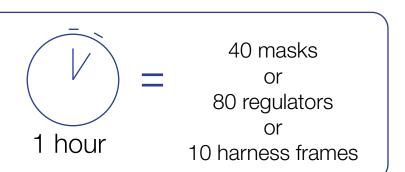
Olaf Fernys, who together with a colleague, is responsible for cleaning 892 BA masks and 661 regulators at Leipzig's fire rescue headquarters, summarises all of these arguments quite simply:

"It is not just about saving time; the improvement in safety and hygiene delivered by the TopClean from Meiko is more important."

Machine cleaning in the **TopClean** also means more safety and security for respiratory protective equipment technicians, because the cleaning and disinfection process delivered by the machine is **approved by leading BA mask manufacturers.** 

Find our more about Meiko's TopClean Serives at www.meiko-uk.co.uk

**TopClean M** Up to 60% faster than conventional methods



TopClean M and D comes with full training support throughout ownership of the machine. Five year warranty and chemical supply also available. Call Meiko for more information and support on 01753-215120 E-Mail: MeikoUK@meiko-uk.co.uk