

It's New! Bulk Sterilizer Water Saving and Tempering Device

By Ira Lapides, President & CEO, Replacement Parts Industries, Inc.

Hospitals and Medical Centers with bulk sterilizers should be quite interested in a new device that RPI now offers. Bottom line, it's easy to install, reduces water consumption, and saves money.

We are pleased to announce that we are now offering a tempering and water saving device that is designed to retro-fit most Amsco 2000 and 3000 series sterilizers, as well as many other bulk sterilizers built prior to the mid-1990's, including those made by Getinge-Castle.

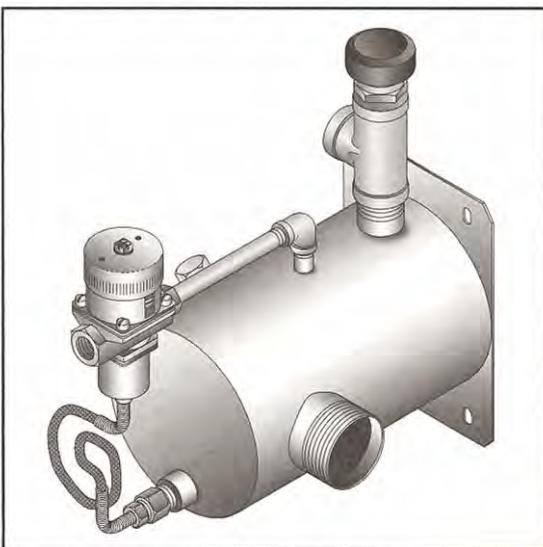
It's called the Water-Mizer™, and it is manufactured by the Continental Equipment Company.

The Water-Mizer, with a patent pending, can save up to 50 gallons of water per hour, resulting in significant cost savings for the facility. Depending on water rates and the amount of time a sterilizer is run each day, savings can add up to as much as \$2,500 per year.

Most steam sterilizers use continuous cold water to temper the steam condensate, which is quite wasteful. However, the Water-Mizer efficiently mixes cold water with steam condensate discharged from the sterilizer to reduce the discharged water temperature before it enters a municipal sewer system.

Installation of the device is quite easy, and as always, RPI provides free technical support.

Many hospitals across the United States have already installed the Water-Mizer and found great suc-



The Water-Mizer

A tempering and water saving device that is designed to retro-fit most Amsco 2000 and 3000 series sterilizers, as well as many other bulk sterilizers built prior to the mid-1990's, including those made by Getinge-Castle.

cess. With the installation of the Water-Mizer on sterilizers in their hospital system, the Seton Health System in Austin, Texas recently won a water conservation award.

For more information about the Water-Mizer and how it can help your facility save, please feel free to call RPI at (800) 221-9723, email your request to www.moreinfo@rpi-parts.com, or visit our website at www.rpiparts.com.

DUE TO HIGH COSTS, RPI CAN NO LONGER OFFER A CHAMBER TO FIT PELTON & CRANE OCR

After more than ten years of production, RPI has finally, and most unfortunately, come to the end of the road in our offering of a replacement chamber (RPI Part #PCC116) to fit the classic Pelton & Crane OCR autoclaves. As you may be aware, the cost of steel worldwide has increased dramatically in the last twelve months, and our supplier can no longer manufacture the chamber at an economical price.

This chamber has always been a very low profit item for us, and now we would be forced to increase our price by at least \$150. Conversations with our customers resulted in the conclusion that the chambers simply would not sell with such a price increase. If you feel differently, please call us to discuss your thoughts on this.

We will continue to offer the replacement chamber to fit the Pelton & Crane OCM (RPI Part #PCC114) for as long as our current production lasts, probably through the middle of 2005. That too will likely be discontinued, as we do not anticipate a drop in steel prices for several years.

If steel prices do adjust back down in a year or two to the point where it is economical to make the chambers again, we will consider going back into production. In the meantime, do not be surprised if you see overall price increases from the OEMs and parts suppliers in the next twelve months as prices for most raw materials have increased significantly in the last year.



Ira Lapidus
CEO & President
Replacement Parts Industries, Inc.

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

I am often asked whether many of the parts that we at RPI make are patented by the original equipment manufacturer (OEM). After all, what we, and others like us do, is reverse engineer parts from medical equipment, and then manufacture the parts to meet or exceed the performance requirements of the OEM. We are, in essence, duplicating the OEM parts.

The answer, the vast majority of the time, is "no". To understand this, let me first provide some definitions. According to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), "a U.S. patent for an invention is the grant of a property right to the inventor(s) issued by the USPTO. The right conferred by the patent grant is ... the right to exclude others from making, using, offering for sale, or selling the invention in the United States." In most cases, patents are now granted for a twenty year term from the date the patent was originally filed.

"Utility" patents are for inventions regarding new processes, machines, articles of manufacture, or any new and useful improvements on existing patented items. "Design" patents are granted to a person or entity "who invents a new, original, and ornamental design for an article of manufacture." Some OEM's pursue design patents for the outward design of their equipment in an attempt to prevent others from selling equipment that looks like theirs.

If you were to review an actual patent, most of which are available online on the USPTO website (www.uspto.gov), the key area of the patent is called the "claims". Claims define the invention and its unique characteristics, and are the aspects of the patent that are legally enforceable. They are normally located near the end of the patent document.

So, how do patents apply in the aftermarket medical parts industry? The answer depends upon the nature of the part or assembly, and the nature of the patent that an OEM might have on a piece of equipment or assembly. Quite simply, most parts cannot be patented. They are essentially "off-the-shelf" items – switches, fuses, hardware, timers, motors, etc. An OEM might specify something unique with one of these items in purchasing it from a manufacturer along with an agreement to make that item proprietary, but that happens infrequently and has nothing to do with a patent on the item. The unique specifications with off-the-shelf items are generally in respect to adjusting electronic specifications, length of wires, basic configuration, and other non-patentable specifications.

Custom manufactured parts and assemblies such as printed circuit boards, molded plastic or rubber, or machined parts possess greater ability for patent claims because they by nature are unique. However, being unique is not itself sufficient for a patent. Most custom parts or assemblies are simply variations on a given theme, such as gears, gaskets, and valves.

WANTED! STERIS SYSTEM 1 LIDS

RPI will pay \$150 for each lid you send us!

RPI is working with an experienced vendor who is retro-fitting lids to fit the Steris System 1 Scope Washer. So we need your old lids. In fact, we will pay you \$150 for each old Steris lid that you send us now!

Please ship your old lids to our retro-fitting center at:

RPI Lid Depot
611 N. FM1660
Hutto, TX 78634

Then starting early 2005, look for our announcement when we will begin offering these retro-fitted lids. And, customers who purchase a lid from RPI will receive a \$150 credit in exchange for sending us their old lid.

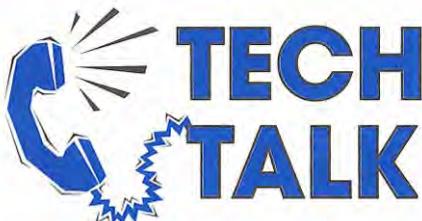
The RPI Lids (RPI Part #SSL043) will have improvements over the original OEM lids, including:

- The metal core of the lid will be bead blasted, removing all paint and debris, and then powder coated.
- The window insert is made from a highly durable plastic.
- The fill block has been redesigned for longer life.
- The tubing running from the lid to the float block is formed from stainless steel, not chrome-plated copper.
- The white rubber gasket on the inner lid is larger, creating a better sealing surface.
- The adhesives used during assembly are stronger than the original adhesives.
- All new materials are FDA approved.

This high quality retro-fitted lid carries the same great RPI warranty as all of our other parts which means that the lid is guaranteed to meet your satisfaction. If it does not, we will be glad to exchange the lid or issue credit.

By the way, this lid complements our other newly manufactured parts to fit the Steris System 1, including check valves, filters, pinch sleeves and the inflatable seal. See our catalog or website (www.rpiparts.com) for a listing and look for even more parts to fit the System 1 coming soon!

Continued on back page



STERILIZERS & THEIR STEAM TRAPS

Dirty Machines Cause Problems for Everyone

By Jim Wisniewski, RPI Product Development

All sterilizer Service Techs have seen them – abused sterilizers. But what can you do about it?

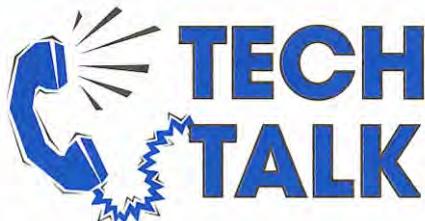
First, it's up to you as the Service Tech to train the operators of sterilizers on proper planned maintenance.

And as part of the training, show the operators how ignoring daily/weekly maintenance leads to dirty chambers and reservoirs thus causing some parts to fail. Make it clear to your customers that "how" they maintain their equipment between service calls can impact both the machine and the service warranty that you offer.

Second, when servicing the units, look for dirt and debris that gets into steam traps, bellows, solenoid valves, multipurpose valves, fill/vent valves, safety valves, metering valves, etc. and on their seals such as o-rings, seats, etc. – sterilizers cannot and will not properly seal off the steam the way the part was designed to if dirt and debris are present.

Also check for leaking valves which will cause the sterilizer to fail. The failure will be most obvious in of two ways: 1.) Loss of pressure/temperature. This may cause spore strips to come back positive. 2.) Automatic shut down in the form of an error code on newer sterilizers.

Bottom line, training the operator on the value of proper maintenance can help you better service your customers and the equipment.



PELTON & CRANE STERILIZERS

An Easy Way to ID P&C OCM, OCR & OCR+

By Mark Micucci, RPI Product Development

Sometimes it can be difficult to identify the difference between the Pelton & Crane OCM, OCR and OCR+ sterilizers. In fact, we receive many telephone calls from Service Techs who need our help with figuring out exactly which model they are servicing. Below are four ways in which you can easily identify the difference between these machines.

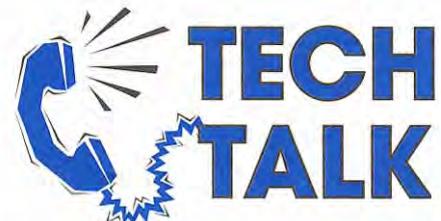
1.) Serial Number Prefix. Pelton & Crane used a letter and number combination as an ID on all of their sterilizers. OCM serial numbers start with A3; OCR with A4; and, OCR+ with A8. So, check the serial number plate located on the rear back of the base plate to identify the unit.

2.) Outer Casing Screw Holes. On the outer casing, or cover, how many screw holes are there along the side? OCM units will have three mounting holes while the OCR and OCR+ will have four mounting holes.

3.) Actual Size of Unit. The size of your sterilizer can help ID which model you have. The OCM is 15" wide x 11.5" tall x 16" deep. The OCR and OCR + are 17" wide x 13.5" tall x 20" deep.

4.) Diameter of Chamber Opening. The OCM has an 8" diameter chamber opening, while the OCR and OCR+ have a 10" opening.

By the way, feel free to share this information with your customers to help them ID the equipment before you arrive for a service call.



TUTTNAUER MULTI-PURPOSE VALVE

Option to Replace Assembly or Simply Replace A Few Parts

By Phil Goldstein, RPI Product Development

Anyone who has ever repaired a Tuttnauer manual sterilizer has at one time or another come in contact with the Multi-purpose Valve Assembly. Whether indirectly when replacing the condensation coil or reservoir, or directly when replacing a micro switch or even the entire valve assembly itself.

Many times the entire valve assembly is replaced because something simple like an o-ring or valve seat is worn beyond use and not available for purchase. RPI to the rescue!

Not only does RPI sell the complete Multi-purpose Valve Assembly (RPI Part #TUV025), but also a Repair Kit (RPI Part #TUK037) that consists of the shaft, a spring clip, o-rings, o-ring lube, valve seats and thread locker.

So now you have the option of replacing the entire valve assembly or rebuilding it with a simple, easy to install rebuild kit. Like many, I seem to collect the defective valve assemblies when replacing them with new ones. Now you can rebuild the defective valve assemblies like new and use them, instead of just collecting them. You have a choice – it's the RPI advantage!

Also available from RPI is the new style Micro Switch (RPI Part #TUS057).

Please see the center section of this newsletter for a complete list of all new parts to fit Tuttnauer.

WHAT'S NEW

Parts are in stock and ready to ship!

DENTAL CHAIRS Pelton & Crane

Fits Chairman

EXIT SWITCH ASSY
RPI PART #PCS720
OEM PART #007899

OPERATE SWITCH ASSY
RPI PART #PCS719
OEM PART #007898

FORMED LEVER SWITCH
RPI PART #PCS714
OEM PART #007506

TRaverse LIMIT SWITCH
RPI PART #PCS715
OEM PART #007596

FOOT SWITCH PEDAL
RPI PART #PCP721
OEM PART #007595

Fits Chairman 5000

A/C POWER SWITCH
RPI PART #PCS735
OEM PART #77 40 947

UP INERCONNECT (PCB)
RPI PART #PCB736
OEM PART #94 34 424

Fits Chairman 5010

UP INTERCONNECT (PCB)
RPI PART #PCB736
OEM PART #94 34 424

Fits Chairman 5090

FOOT SWITCH & CABLE ASSY
RPI PART #PCA737
OEM PART #18 99 702

LIMIT SWITCH PCB
RPI PART #PCB733
New OEM PART #30 06 629

Fits Coachman I & II

FOOT SWITCH MICROSWITCH
RPI PART #PCS722
OEM PART #023944

MOTOR LIMIT SWITCH
RPI PART #PCS725
OEM PART #018956

SWITCH BACK ASSY (PCB)

RPI PART #PCB723
OEM PART #018326

DENTAL LIGHTS Various OEMs (see below)

LENS SPLASH SHIELD

RPI PART #MAL002
OEM PART #122845/52R430
Fits Henry Schein, Knight & Marus

LENS SPLASH SHIELD

RPI PART #RCL609
OEM PART #148234
Fits Knight & Ritter

DENTAL LIGHTS Belmont/Healthco

Fits X-Calibur

LIGHT SOCKET KIT
RPI PART #BEK027
OEM PART # (No OEM Part # available)

Kit includes: Spring Clip Holder Assembly, Socket Holder, Light Socket, Grounding Wire Assembly, Socket Housing, Rubber Washer, and Socket Holder Nut – All parts in kit also sold separately.

ADJUSTMENT TOOL (SPRING TENSION)

RPI PART #BET029
OEM PART #HLU1060

Used to adjust spring tension and head position.

More new parts also available:

Front Shield to fit lights with oval handles, Front Shield to fit lights with square handles, Lamp, Wire Harness (6', 8' & 10') to fit balance arm assembly, Power Switch, Joint Bolt Kit to fit yoke assembly, and Back Cover Frame Screw.

TABLE TOP STERILIZERS Midmark • Ritter

Fits M9 & M11

VENT SOLENOID VALVE
RPI PART #MIV073 (Fits M9D/M11D)
OEM PART #002-0519-00

VENT VALVE REPAIR KIT
RPI PART #MIK082 (Fits M9D/M11D)
OEM PART # (No OEM Part # available)

COIL (VENT VALVE)
RPI PART #MIC083 (Fits M9D/M11D)
OEM PART # (No OEM Part # available)

PULSE SOLENOID
RPI PART #MIS079 (Fits M11)
OEM PART #002-0363-03

PULSE SOLENOID (REDESIGNED!)
RPI PART #MIS044 (Fits M9)
OEM PART #002-0363-00

STEAM TRAP (New Style)
RPI PART #MIV081 (Fits M9/M11)
OEM PART #002-0654-00

STEAM TRAP KIT
RPI PART #MIK078 (Fits M9/M11)
OEM PART #002-0654-00
Kit includes: Steam Trap, Upper tube and lower tubes, and compression nuts with sleeves – Parts in kit also sold separately.

SPRING ARM
RPI PART #MIA086 (Fits M9)
OEM PART #050-2362-00

SPRING ARM
RPI PART #MIA077 (Fits M11)
OEM PART #050-3970-00

WATER LEVEL SENSOR ASSY
RPI PART #MIS075 (Fits M9/M11)
OEM PART #002-0358-00

STERILIZER PM KIT
RPI PART #MIK072 (Fits M9)
OEM PART #002-0361-00
Kit includes: Door Gasket, Dam Gasket, Mesh Style Filters, Sintered Bronze Filter and Door Springs – All parts in kit also sold separately.

STERILIZER PM KIT
RPI PART #MIK080 (Fits M11)
OEM PART #002-0504-00
Kit includes: Door Gasket, Dam Gasket, Mesh Style Filters, Sintered Bronze Filter and Door Springs – All parts in kit also sold separately.

TABLES & CHAIRS Midmark • Ritter

Fits Various Models (see below)

LOCKING GAS CYLINDER
RPI PART #MIC088
OEM PART #016-0240-00
Fits 404

POWER HOSE KIT
RPI PART #MIH084
OEM PART #002-0123-00
Fits E75*, 111, 114, 116, 119, 311 & 319

RETURN HOSE KIT
RPI PART #MIH085
OEM PART #002-0124-00
Fits E75*, 111, 114, 116, 119, 311 & 319

RETURN HOSE KIT
RPI PART #MIH087
OEM PART #002-0126-00
Fits E75*, 111, 114, 117, 119, 311, 317 & 319

E75* = Evolution 75

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Service Bulletin

TABLE TOP STERILIZERS Tuttnauer

Fits Tuttnauer

MULTI-PURPOSE VLV ASSY
RPI PART #TUV025
OEM PART #CT810013

MULTI-PURPOSE VLV REPAIR KIT
RPI PART #TUK037
OEM PART #(No OEM Part # available)

TIMER with Bell (60 Minute)
Now Includes Knob!
RPI PART #TUT008
OEM PART #01910011

TIMER/MULTI-PURPOSE VLV KNOB
RPI PART #TUK049
OEM PART #02450002

CONTROL THERMOSTAT
Now Includes Knob!
RPI PART #TUT007
OEM PART #1620101

THERMOSTAT KNOB
RPI PART #TUK050
OEM PART #02450003

MICRO SWITCH (New Style)
RPI PART #TUS057
OEM PART #01910197

PIPE SEALANT 567
RPI PART #RPA459
OEM PART #(No OEM Part # available)

RADIANT INFANT WARMERS Hill Rom/Air Shields

Fits Stabilet 1250, 2000 A, B & C

BASSINET BRACKET/HINGE
RPI PART #AIB109 (Color: Beige)
OEM PART #BKK010

BASSINET BRACKET/HINGE
RPI PART #AIB110 (Color: Black)
OEM PART #KB010

Parts Updates & Catalog Corrections To Note

Following is a list of updates on some of our parts and corrections to our catalog:

Pelton & Crane
Plunger
RPI Part #PCK102
Update: Improved seal retention

Vernitron
Heater Element Assembly
RPI Part #VRH006
Update: Part is now sold as RPI Part #AMH018.

It's Back! Sterile Water Filter to fit Steris System 1

It's back – the Sterile Water Filter (RPI Part #SSF012) to fit Steris System 1. In stock, ready to ship!

When you order this part, be sure to read the installation instructions on how to set the DIP switch. And, don't forget to pre-wet the filter – either soak it in sterile water or run a second diagnostic cycle if the first cycle fails. The filter performs better if pre-wetted. And, look for more parts to come!

Now Available! Bassinet Bracket/Hinge To fit Hill Rom/Air Shields Stabilet 1250, 2000 A, B & C

Now available is the Bassinet Bracket/Hinge to fit the Stabilet 1250, 2000A/B and 2000C. RPI offers the bracket/hinge in two colors – Beige (RPI Part #AIB109) and Black (RPI Part #AIB110). And look for more parts to come!

RPI Dental Light Reflectors ... New! Not Re-coated & include a **FREE** Lens Splash Shield!

Rpi dental light Reflectors are new – not re-coated! What's more, they now come with a **FREE** Lens Splash Shield to fit A-dec, Henry Schein, Knight, Marus, and Pelton & Crane.

Now Available! Locking Gas Cylinder To fit Midmark • Ritter Table Model 404

Now available! The Locking Gas Cylinder (RPI Part #MIC088) to fit Midmark 404!

RPI Has It All – When It Comes to Hoses and Cylinders To fit Midmark • Ritter Table & Chairs

If **hoses and cylinders** are what you need to fit Midmark tables and chairs for the Evolution 75 and 100/300/400 Series, then RPI is your best source. What's more, RPI has a vast array of **switches** including the rocker, return limit, auto return, heater, and foot control to fit various Midmark models. See page 4 of this newsletter for more new parts to fit the tables and chairs.

An easy-to-use chart listing all of the parts we have to fit these tables and chairs is available – see the chart in the Midmark Tables & Chairs section in the RPI catalog or visit the RPI website at www.rpiparts.com.



Sherry Lapides
Vice President, Customer Relations
Replacement Parts Industries, Inc.

**8 to 4
NO MORE**

Where has the year gone? I know that time is supposed to fly faster the older you grow, but this is getting to be ridiculous. It seems like just last week Al and I were discussing summer vacation plans, and now here it is almost Thanksgiving.

This summer the Olympics in Athens were in full swing and we are very proud of all of the American athletes and the wonderful job they did. Hearing our national anthem played over and over and thinking about our trip around parts of the U.S. this past summer makes me proud all over again to be an American.

The high spot of our four-week motorhome summer trip was South Dakota and Mount Rushmore. The monument is incredible. It is thrilling to see it in person and then learn how it was hammered out of solid granite. The Avenue of the Flags walkway, which leads you to the best viewing spot of the monument, is beautiful, with all of the states' flags flying. We saw Mount Rushmore in the afternoon and then came back in the evening for the patriotic program and lighting ceremony. It was very moving. I hope all of you have a chance to see it some day. We also saw the Crazy Horse monument, which is still under construction. It is immense!

South Dakota was much more green and interesting than I had expected. We saw the herds of bison, antelope, deer, mountain sheep, goats and burros. There were beautiful green fields, lakes, and lots of impressive granite peaks.

We caught up on a lot of history of the west, including the battlefield at Little Big Horn, Deadwood, Sheridan, Cheyenne and Cody. Our stay in Cody was really fun. We went to opening night of the Cody Stampede and got our fill of rodeo activities. Also in Cody is one of the most interesting museums I have ever seen. It is devoted to Buffalo Bill Cody and has what I think is the largest collection of firearms and weapons in the country. There is also a large section devoted to the Plains Indians, rooms containing nothing but paintings and sculptures by Remington and Charles Russell and a wonderful collection of paintings of the west by other artists, as well as an area devoted to the natural history of the area.

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Al Lapides
CEO Emeritus & Chairman of the Board
Replacement Parts Industries, Inc.

AL'S VIEW

It's a constant battle. No matter what has happened or what the law says, there always seems to be some OEMs who don't want independent service organizations (ISOs) to exist. A few years ago, the Supreme Court leveled the playing field in the Kodak case. Or so we thought. The OEMs try to get around this in a very simple and direct manner: they challenge you to sue them. It is one thing to have legal rights. It is another to try to enforce them. It costs money, BIG money. They have it and you don't.

This is what happened with Ohmeda a few years ago. However, some ISOs decided to band together, pool their resources, and fight back. It took a few years, a lot of sweat, and a lot of risk, but they made it. Ohmeda finally realized they had a determined opposition, which had the law on its side. A settlement was reached with the plaintiff ISOs.

At that time, Drager was still very friendly to these ISOs and was looked upon favorably as being quite willing to have a level playing field. That changed dramatically over the next few years. Drager proceeded to tilt the playing field. Parts became a source of major problems for the independents.

Looking at what had happened with Ohmeda, another group banded together to assert their legal rights. Luckily they found lawyers who were so confident in the case that the financial risk up front became doable. These lawyers actually grouped together to pursue the case. They included Pruitt Moore, Paul Bartlett, and the firms of Constant & Vela, and Provost & Umphrey. It is interesting that all of these lawyers are based in Texas. It took them a few years of diligent work, but they finally reached a settlement with Drager. Because such settlements are normally confidential, we do not know the detailed outcome. However, since the ISO plaintiffs agreed to the settlement, I can only assume that at least some of their objectives were met. It was a job well done.

I had the privilege of working on the case as an expert witness. My job was to discredit any assertion by Drager that any ISO could simply reverse engineer and manufacture any part at any time. I presented information that shows that they can't. The cost of engineering, tooling, and very short run manufacturing is exorbitant for any ISO. That is why RPI

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SERVICE TIP



RADIANT INFANT WARMERS AND QUARTZ HEATERS: *Overall Information & Service Tips*

By Neil Blagman, RPI Product Development

Infants are born with underdeveloped temperature regulating abilities and can chill quickly. Modern medicine has realized that the most effective way to prevent chilling and to warm an infant is to use a source of infrared radiant energy.

The modern radiant infant warmer uses a quartz sheathed metallic heating element to generate infrared radiation. Electric current is applied to the internal heating coil which in turn heats the quartz outer sheath that glows with infrared radiant energy. A sheathed heating coil is used due to its ability to withstand temperature losses due to drafts. Quartz is used because of its quick response to temperature changes, its ability to provide the highest level of infrared transmission from the heating coil and because of its extreme durability. The radiant heat released by the quartz tube heater generates very low emissions in the visible spectrum which is ideal for use near a newborn infant's sensitive eyes.

Replacement of the quartz heater in a radiant infant warmer requires basic hand tools and either a service manual or diagrams of the heater housing. The following instructions can assist with the repairs.

How to remove the quartz heater.

- 1.) Remove power to the radiant infant warmer – never work on an infant warmer that is plugged into a live outlet as many units contain live voltage circuits which remain active when the power switch is turned off.
- 2.) Remove any grills or housings that prevent access to the heater element.
- 3.) Remove any direct shielding which may cover the ceramic ends of the heater element.
- 4.) Depending on the manufacturer

and the model, the heater element will either have wires and push on terminals or it will have ceramic terminals that press fit into ceramic sockets. If the warmer has ceramic sockets, one of the sockets will be spring loaded and the spring in these sockets can be difficult to compress. Using a cloth towel to hold the quartz heater, press the heater into the socket that has the spring with enough force to compress the spring and release the opposite end of the heater from the stationary socket. (Warning: Quartz heaters can fracture without warning and can produce very sharp fragments and edges so using a cloth towel will help prevent injury.) Once the heater has been released from the stationary socket it should be easily removed from the heater housing.

What to do with the quartz heater once it is removed.

The removed quartz heater should be treated as a hazard to staff and patients – the quartz used for the sheath can chip or crack (producing very sharp edges) from the rough handling that may be needed to remove it or from abuse it might receive in the hospital waste handling process. To help prevent accidents, the removed quartz heater should be covered with a layer of electrical or duct tape (duct tape – is there anything it can't do?) before disposing it in the standard waste stream.

How to install the new quartz heater once the old one has been removed.

Warning: Do not handle the new quartz heater with bare hands or powdered gloves – the oils in your skin and the powder on the gloves can cause a darkening of the quartz sheath and a reduction in the life expectancy of the heater. Installation

is as follows:

- 1.) Before installing the new heater element be sure the warm is not plugged into a live outlet – remember, safety first!
- 2.) Using a cloth towel to safely handle the heater, inspect the heater for cracks or chips in the quartz sheath that may have occurred during shipping. If you find any chips or cracks do not install the heater – return the heater immediately and request a new one.
- 3.) Using a cloth towel to hold the heater, insert one end into the heater socket containing the spring. Using moderate force, compress the socket spring fully and swing the opposite end of the heater into place in the fixed socket – be sure you have both heater terminals fully engaged in their sockets and that they firmly hold the heater in place. Do not replace any of the shielding, grills or housings at this time.
- 4.) Plug the warmer into a live electric outlet and operate the warmer at full power for at least 30 minutes. Watch and listen for small pieces of quartz that might fall from the warmer module during the first few minutes. After 30 minutes turn the warmer off for 5 minutes and then power the warmer up for an additional 5 minutes.
- 5.) Power down the warmer and unplug it from the live outlet. Allow the warmer to cool thoroughly and using a cloth towel, carefully remove the heating element. Examine the element for breaks, chips or physical damage. Again if any are found, return the heater and request a new one.
- 6.) Re-install the heating element and replace any shields, grills or housings removed earlier.
- 7.) Plug the warmer back into a live outlet and operate the warmer for 10 minutes before returning to service.

Finally, if you need assistance in replacing a quartz heater, please feel free to contact the RPI Technical Assistance Department. We can be reached via telephone (800) 221-9723 ext. 135; fax (818) 882-7028, Email techhelp@rpiparts.com; or through our website www.rpiparts.com.

8 to 4 NO MORE

(Continued from page 6)

July 4th was spent on the shores of Flathead Lake in northern Montana. We went to a real small town July 4th parade and then had a potluck dinner at the RV park we were parked, followed by western dancing and spectacular fireworks. Our trip ended in one of our favorite areas, California's Sierra Nevada mountains where we met our two sons and their families and spent a few days fishing and relaxing by the lake. We also drove over Beartooth Pass, with a summit of more than 11,000 feet. It was cold, with snow and ice all around and marvelous vistas of snow-covered mountain peaks.

It was a wonderful trip, full of beautiful scenery and friendly people, but it sure felt good to get back home to friends and family and our spacious newly-expanded quarters here at RPI.

We hope all of you had a great summer, too, and are ready for the changing of the seasons and thoughts of the holidays. We wish you the very best for the holiday season and may the new year bring you great joy and happiness.

AI'S VIEW

(Continued from page 6)

and other such reverse engineering companies exist. That is why we don't do any service. You can't do both successfully.

Both of the above cases have done much to help our industry. However, they have a limitation. The settlement is between the plaintiffs and the

OEMs. It does not necessarily apply to the rest of our industry. Court trials are costly, but I am hoping that some of you will some day hold out for that. Court decisions then become additional hurdles for all OEMs to get over.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

(Continued from page 2)

Additionally, under current law, an aftermarket parts manufacturer would need to directly infringe upon a patent, or be a contributory infringer. Direct infringement means that the parts manufacturer would be manufacturing and selling a part, component, or assembly that the OEM has made claims to in their final, approved patent. For example, if an OEM utilized a unique spring mechanism in the lid assembly of its machine for which they made approved claims in their patent, an aftermarket parts seller could not manufacture and sell an identical mechanism.

Contributory infringement would mean that the aftermarket parts manufacturer is selling a part/assembly that helps a third party infringe upon the OEM's patent such as the impermissible reconstruction of a spent apparatus. The parts seller would also need to be making a non-staple item and would have to know that it was especially made or adapted for use in an infringement of a patent.

In either case, the customers of the aftermarket parts manufacturer are allowed to exercise their lawful right to repair their own property. The

Supreme Court has also addressed the issue, as have the Federal Circuit Courts. They define permissible repair to include replaceable parts, and the Federal Circuit Court established a safe harbor by stating that "at a minimum, repair exists if the part being repaired is a readily replaceable part." Quite often, this is most easily identified if the OEM sells the part itself to customers for the purpose of repairing their equipment.

Please also keep in mind that I am not addressing copyright laws here. There may be some overlap between the two if the part being sold is a printed circuit board that includes copyrighted software. Copyright laws and especially the Digital Millennium Copyright Act have case law pending. Also, I just want to be clear that I am not an attorney, and recommend that if you have specific questions regarding parts and patents that you contact an attorney who specializes in patent law (the preceding was a disclaimer recommended by my patent attorney, who reviewed this article for me, and like most attorneys, wants to put disclaimers on everything they do!)

Patent law is a very tricky and technical domain, and it is an area that requires close attention. As you can see, in the medical equipment service industry, patent violations on parts manufacturing are quite rare, but they can happen. Having a basic understanding of patent law, and knowing the resources to consult is a good first step to preventing any problems down the road.

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