
Colorant & Auto Dispenser Maintenance

This document will attempt to convey the importance of colorant and dispenser maintenance to the reader as most issues can be avoided with the correct knowledge.

Basic Colorant Information

In its most primitive of components colorant is comprised of liquids and solids (pigments). As the liquids evaporate the colorant thickens, or worse it can dry out. Never add additional liquids to your colorant. If you find the colorant is too thick then empty the canister and start again with fresh colorant. Evaporation can be minimized by ensuring your lids are always on correctly and you do not add more colorant to a canister than you will use in a reasonable amount of time.

As colorant thickens due to evaporation it can cause mistints for multiple reasons from colorant strength being intensified to calibration being compromised. In worst-case scenarios it will thicken to the point of not being able to dispense at all.

Generally speaking no two colorants behave the same. Some colorants are very forgiving while others tend to require more attention. Some of the colorants that tend to require more attention are labelled as “High Strength” colorants. It’s important to note the fact that a colorant labeled as “High Strength” does not necessarily mean it will be problematic.

Some colorants can be under or over-agitated which can lead to separation or thickening of one or more colorants in the system. We do not recommend changing agitation times without first contacting our help desk. Not all colorant systems use the same agitation times.

If you find a colorant is separating (more liquid on top than expected) or thickening then you should test the operation of the agitation motors and / or have the agitation time checked.

Occasionally there are colorant manufacturing issues which can cause problems as well. These problems normally display as mildew, thickening, separation, grainy, or lumpy colorant. If you suspect an issue like this you should gather the batch number from the canister of colorant and call the manufacturer for further details. Normally their phone number will be on the colorant container.

Colorant Preparation

HERO recommends following the directions of your colorant manufacturer. In addition to those instructions we ask that you let your colorant rest overnight (or longer) before pouring it into the dispenser whenever possible. This allows the micro-bubbles caused by the mixing action to dissipate. In general the thicker the colorant the longer it takes for the micro-bubbles to rise to the surface at which time they are no longer an issue.

If micro-bubbles are not managed correctly, then overtime they will cause problems with dispensing. In some cases the micro-bubbles will immediately be noticed.

Maintenance

Your HERO dispenser must be correctly maintained and will provide many years of service if it is cared correctly. Most issues that occur are from lack of maintenance.

Tips for a well maintained dispenser.

- Do not skip daily scheduled maintenance unless the location is closed.
 - When skipping a scheduled maintenance take extra care on the next.
- Some locations may benefit from doing all or some maintenance twice a day, or more.
- Do not turn off the dispenser as it will stop the agitation cycle.
- If possible do not turn off the computer the dispenser is attached to.
- Assign specific employees to care for the dispenser and add it to their daily tasks.
- Always have backups trained on dispenser usage and maintenance as a failsafe.
- Including a log book of when maintenance was completed is beneficial.

➤ **Daily**

- Purge dispenser
- Clean & wet sponge
- Dab nozzles
- Add colorant as required
- Clean Colorant Spills Immediately

➤ **Weekly**

- Inspect unit for any visible problems
- Clean laser aiming device
- Clean excess colorant off canister lids
- Wipe down dispenser
- Test agitation motors

➤ **Monthly**

- Check Colorant Levels

Purging:

The dispenser must be purged daily. The methods used to purge are not the same for all locations and as such you must follow the instructions provided when your dispenser was installed.

Cleaning & Wetting Sponge:

The method used to complete this process is partially dependent on the installation type. Remove the humidifier sponge and clean it of colorant, leave it saturated with water. Fill the sponge cup with water and place the sponge on top of the water in the cup, then place the lid on top. The sponge will be forced down as you attach the lid and some water will overflow. If required to prevent spillage you may pour a small amount of water out of the sponge cup.

Dab Nozzles:

Dab the nozzles gently with a moist paper towel. You may also scrub them gently with a soft bristle toothbrush (watch for spattering). Be cautious not to push the nozzles up and out of their housing.

Check agitation motors:

Test your agitation motors by turning on the agitation cycle (depending on the software this method varies. Call HERO if you do not know how to do this). While the agitation cycle is on look at the paddles and make sure they turn. If your agitation motor is inside of the canister lid you may flip the lid upside-down while it's agitating and make sure the agitation block is turning. Do not tug on the wire.

Check Colorant Levels:

Compare colorant levels in the software to the level that is in each canister. Adjust as required.

Troubleshooting Dispense Problems

This list is not a comprehensive troubleshooting guide, it is intended to help quickly diagnose some common dispense issues. Call HERO at any time for assistance. 1-800-494-4376

Symptom	Cause	Solution
Thick, Congealed, or Dry colorant.	Agitation motor not working.	Check agitation functionality. Paddle should turn.
	Incorrect agitation times.	Contact HERO to check agitation times.
	Lid not on canister correctly.	Test fit and function.
	Lid damaged.	Replace.
	Too much colorant in canister for amount that colorant is used.	Add / Maintain less colorant in canister.

Symptom	Cause	Solution
Separated colorant.	Agitation motor not working.	Check agitation functionality. Paddle should turn.
	Incorrect agitation times.	Contact HERO to check agitation times.
Colorant Squirting Sideways.	Sponge is dry.	Wet sponge. (Daily Maintenance)
	Moisture Seal is missing or positioned incorrectly.	Check for moisture seal and reposition or replace as required.
	Dirty or dry nozzle tips.	Clean affected nozzles.
		Allow capper to close and rehydrate nozzles when doing multiple pails.
	Damaged nozzle tip.	Replace affected nozzles.
Dispense sounds normal but colorant does not exit nozzle.	Clogged Nozzle.	Clean affected nozzles.
		"Deep Clean" nozzle by removing from hose and cleaning under water. Do not damage nozzle.
		Allow capper to close and rehydrate nozzles when doing multiple pails.
		Replace affected nozzles.
	Nozzle pushed into dispenser.	Check that you can see the tip of the nozzle protruding out of the nozzle housing. If you can't see it you may be dispensing into the machine. Call HERO.

Symptom	Cause	Solution
Dispense sounds normal but colorant does not exit nozzle.	Empty colorant canister.	Check if canister(s) in question have colorant in them and that the colorant level matches that shown on your "Canisters" screen. Adjust as required.
Popping noises while dispensing.	Aeration (Micro-Bubbles)	Turn on agitation cycle to try and force bubbles out of colorant.
		Dispense 10-40oz into a clean container. You can reuse the colorant (assuming it's healthy) after it has rested. In extreme cases you may need to dispense all affected colorant and start with fresh, non-aerated product.
	Dirty or dry nozzle tips.	Clean affected nozzles.
		Allow capper to close and rehydrate nozzles when doing multiple pails.
	Agitation motor not working.	Check agitation functionality. Paddle should turn.
	Empty colorant canister.	Check if canister(s) in question have colorant in them and that the colorant level matches that shown on your "Canisters" screen. Adjust as required.
Dispense works for a short time at start and / or end of cycle. May make a higher pitched noise than usual.	Stuck pump.	Pump needs to be unblocked. Contact HERO.
Dispense sounds as though it's grinding or grumbling. No colorant dispenses, or only a very small amount dispenses.	Stuck pump.	Pump needs to be unblocked. Contact HERO.
	Pump connection issue.	Loose plug into pump or circuit board. Possible damaged pump, wire, or circuit. Contact HERO.

Symptom	Cause	Solution
No colorant exits nozzle and no sound from pump.	Dispenser in "Demo Mode".	Close all software > Turn off dispenser > Reboot PC. Turn on PC and allow it to boot > Turn on Dispenser > Dispenser should start to agitate > Open dispense software. If dispenser does not agitate or if you get a connection error you should call HERO.
	Pump connection issue.	Unplugged pump or circuit board wire. Possible damaged pump, wire, or circuit board. Contact HERO.

Contact HERO at 1-800-494-4376