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# Tunnel Tip #1

*Start with accuracy, finish with quality*

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## CLEANING OF LINT SCREENS

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When garments travel through a tunnel finisher they pass through two separate environments: live steam and high temperature recirculated air. Both are important to the production and finishing of garments.

The air in a tunnel finisher's finishing chamber is recirculated to efficiently maintain the preset air temperature. As the air moves down and over the garment, it picks up the surface lint from the fabric and deposits it on the lint screens, which are positioned in front of the blower system.

Over a period of time the lint screens fill up with lint resulting in reduced airflow to the blower; the more lint accumulation, the greater the reduction of airflow through the system. Restricted airflow reduces evaporation of moisture from the fabric, as well as the shaking action of the garment, resulting in less production and wrinkle removal.

To prevent the loss of quality and productivity, it is necessary to clean the lint screens on a regular schedule according to the requirements of each individual machine. The greater the volume of garments passing through the finisher, the shorter the time span between cleaning.

Some plants doing a large volume of finishing have found it necessary to schedule the cleaning of lint screens every two hours throughout the day. To establish a schedule, pick the busiest day of the week and clean the lint screens before starting the tunnel finisher for the day. Check the lint screens every hour and note how much lint is on the surface of the screens.

Note the heaviest accumulation of lint will be at the entrance of the finishing chamber, decreasing toward the exit of the chamber. It is time to clean the screens when the screen closest to the exit has accumulated a light layer of lint.

If the lint screens are not cleaned at this time, lint continues to accumulate. The blower, struggling to draw air through the lint screen, starts to pull lint through the screen where it may become deposited on the blades of the blower wheel. If lint is allowed to accumulate on the blower wheel, it also becomes less efficient further reducing airflow. The problem compounds, production and quality decline, and the tunnel finisher becomes very inefficient.

Cleaning lint screens before they become completely blocked with lint should be given top priority. 