

Preventive Maintenance: Key to Reliability

By Heather Schlichting, RSC Equipment Rental – Western Builder, Associated Construction Publication – 12/15/2008

Contractors know that if their equipment breaks down, it throws a monkey wrench into their schedule. Broken equipment can mean idle people and materials as well as missed deadlines.

Contractors all have the same need – equipment that delivers reliability. One key to reliability is preventive maintenance. Equipment that is serviced properly and regularly is far less likely to break down.

The primary goal of preventive maintenance is to mitigate the failure of equipment before it actually occurs. Maintenance is designed to preserve and enhance equipment reliability by servicing and/or replacing worn components before they fail.

Preventive maintenance activities include equipment inspections, partial or complete overhauls at specified periods, oil changes, lubrication and so on. The ideal preventive maintenance program follows manufacturer standards and helps eliminate equipment failure before it occurs.

With a keen focus on equipment reliability, RSC Equipment Rental has implemented formal programs to keep its products in optimum operating condition.

Maintenance checks and repairs are routinely performed before, during and after renting equipment. The customers not only receive the assurance of well-maintained machines but also avoid the hassle and expense of having to service the equipment themselves.

Value of Preventive Maintenance

Many misconceptions exist about preventive maintenance. One is that maintenance is optional, a luxury or unduly costly. This false logic dictates that it would cost more to carry out scheduled downtime and preventive maintenance than it would cost to operate equipment until it fails or major repair becomes absolutely necessary. However, one must compare not only the cost outlays but also long-term benefits and savings associated with good maintenance programs.

Without preventive maintenance, one risks lost production time from equipment breakdowns, typically at the worst possible moment. There is never a “good” time for a

piece of equipment to go down on a job, which is why RSC invests in preventive maintenance. A disciplined maintenance program can result in higher utilization of equipment, meaning greater overall productivity.

Long-term benefits of preventive maintenance include:

- Improved reliability
- Decreased downtime
- Increased productivity
- Diminished cost of replacement
- Better resource management

“By tracking preventative maintenance done, we provide our customers peace of mind that our equipment is ready, reliable and dependable when they need it,” says Bill Strickler, RSC's Vice President of Innovation. “Preventative maintenance is so important at RSC that we are 98 percent current on manufacturers' suggested preventative maintenance.”

Choose a Rental Provider with a Comprehensive Preventive Maintenance Program

When working with a rental provider that provides the equipment you need to get your job done, look for a company that doesn't only perform equipment service on its own schedule, in their own shop or on site when there is a problem, but services the equipment on a regular basis based on the manufacturer's recommended intervals.

Since many customers rent equipment for long-term needs, you should also look for a rental supplier that schedules and performs preventive maintenance updates at jobsites. That kind of comprehensive program ensures that, even when equipment is out on rent, it will be serviced according to schedule.

“We work hard to provide customers with reliable equipment when and where they need it,” says Strickler. “Our preventive maintenance commitment helps keep our equipment in top working order, and we want customers to know that if they need something, no matter the day or time, RSC is the reliable choice.”

Editor's Note: Heather Schlichting is a communications specialist with RSC Equipment Rental.