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## **Prepare sprayers to ‘spring’ into action when weather warms**

MOORESVILLE, Indiana, February 24, 2015 – It might not seem like it with bitter cold temperatures and snow and ice across much of North America, but spring is coming. And with it, the start of crop season.

Growers with self-propelled sprayers should inspect and perform necessary maintenance on their machines before pulling them out of the barn and heading to the field to apply pesticides, said Jeremy Hurt, Senior Application Specialist at Equipment Technologies, the manufacturer of Apache-brand sprayers.

“Many growers will spend a few weeks preparing their planter for the spring,” Hurt said. “They also need to invest some time going over their sprayer. It’s too important a piece of machinery to ignore.”

Most sprayer preparation can be completed in 8-10 hours, Hurt said. The inspection/service checklist should include engine, hydraulic and dropbox oils; air intakes; lights; accumulators; tire pressures; air conditioners and cab filters; chemical tanks; booms and spray nozzles; and on-board field computers.

Owner’s guides such as the Apache Operator’s Manual provide servicing recommendations and specifications for parts and fluids. Growers should follow the owner’s manual when maintaining their sprayers, Hurt said.



“By reading the owner’s manual you’ll use the correct oils and at the correct levels, for example,” he said. “You wouldn’t want to use regular oil when the manual calls for 80/90 weight.”

Left unchecked, air intakes can come with surprises: small animals, which use the tubes for winter shelter. “It’s easy to pull off the air cleaner and make sure there’s not a mouse or big bird’s nest. I’ve seen it happen several times,” Hurt said.

Sprayers equipped with accumulators – devices that cushion booms and the sprayer’s suspension as the machine rides over rough terrain – must be fully charged to operate at peak efficiency. Sprayer dealers are best equipped to test and service accumulators, Hurt said.

No grower wants to find the air conditioner on his or her sprayer isn’t working on a hot day. Turn the system on to ensure the system is blowing cool air and have it serviced or repaired if it is not.

“When it comes to the wet system, you’ll want to check the product tank straps and make sure they are tight because they could have stretched over time,” Hurt said. “Also, check all your boom plumbing for leaks and cracks, and the clamps for tightness. That’s especially true if your machine is four or five years old.”

Booms also should be inspected for wear and tested for unfolding and folding, and adjusted for proper height. Again, refer to the machine’s owner’s manual.

“One of the last things you’ll want to do is verify your field computer’s operation,” Hurt said. “It’s a good idea to remove them from the machine so they don’t get exposed to cold temperatures. When they are reinstalled in the sprayer, turn them on and verify all the calibrations are correct, and make sure they are ready for the first field you do. You wouldn’t want to get caught on that first application run with a system that’s not controlling correctly or that cannot collect field data.”

Hurt suggested growers grease their sprayers before spring, as well.

Apaches are mechanical drive sprayers that come in three models: the 750-gallon AS720, 1,000-gallon AS1020/1025 and 1,200-gallon AS1220. The sprayers are assembled at Equipment Technologies’ Mooresville, Ind., plant and marketed through a large dealership network in the United States, Canada, Australia and Ukraine.

All 2015 model Apaches come with an industry-best five-year warranty.

Visit [www.etsprayers.com](http://www.etsprayers.com) for more information and a dealership locator.

**PHOTO CAPTION:** Growers with self-propelled sprayers should unfold and fold their machine's booms – a practice called “exercising” – as part of a preseason sprayer inspection. (A publication-quality photo is available here: <http://www.etsprayers.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/armsworking.jpg>)

**NOTE TO MEDIA:** Publication-quality Apache Sprayer photos and graphics are available here: <http://www.etsprayers.com/media-inquiry/>. For additional information and interviews, contact Steve Leer at 317-210-7313 or [steve.leer@etsprayers.com](mailto:steve.leer@etsprayers.com).