



ARE YOU SUMMER READY? #NOSURPRISEVACATION

By Trevor Brathwaite



This morning when I woke up, I was greeted by the sun blazing down on my face and I thought “Great! Summer is finally here. Where should I go for a holiday?” This brings me on to the subject at hand.

In summer your compressor will need some extra love and attention as you really don't want them to take that surprise vacation possibly leading to costs in the thousands of pounds/dollars/euros whatever your currency may be. We know the rising summer temperatures can make for challenging working conditions for your equipment and that includes air compressors. Compressed air systems are relied upon for numerous processes but often forgotten about until it breaks down and your operation comes to a halt. To prevent your compressor from taking any 'surprise

vacation' this summer, you can keep them working with some preventive maintenance, saving you the 'unplanned downtime' later in the season.

During these warmer months, there is an increase in pollen and insects, and these will end up being drawn into your air filters and blocking your coolers. This will increase the running temperature, which will inevitably lead to the compressor failing due to overheating. A simple daily check of your dust evacuators, filters and coolers will ensure you reduce the overall risk to your compressor. If the compressor room has filters, they will need to be changed more frequently as well. Don't forget to keep a close eye on the operating temperature of the compressor as that will also be a first warning sign that something could be wrong.

In addition, your condensate system will work even harder to expel the additional moisture, so ensure the drains are functioning correctly on your filters and air receiver. You don't want to have to throw away products that have been contaminated by wet, oily compressed air. It may also be time to change that float in the inline filters and water separator (if fitted). Similarly, if your compressor is fitted with a timed drain, it is worth changing the draining cycle so that it's more frequent but check the expelling time; you don't want to expel valuable air.



If you have a portable air compressor busy slogging away on job sites, look after them, too. Tyre pressure should be closely monitored for the correct pressure and tread. Whilst a lot of us enjoy the hot summer heat, materials like rubber aren't such a fan and will naturally expand, causing changes in the tyre pressure. The same goes for the belts in these compressors. The heat will cause them to expand, which alters the tension. A quick tension check will ensure everyone's safety and the safe running of the compressor.

Is your compressor room sufficiently ventilated?
Is your dryer functioning correctly?
Is your compressor operating at an acceptable temperature?
When was the last time you carried out a fluid sample?

Remember that simple checks can make a world of difference to both the production and efficiency of your compressor as well as to the safety of your employees. When you go outside in the sunshine you lather up in sun cream, ensuring you don't burn. Your compressor needs TLC in the summer, too. If you neglect it, you may end up 'burnt'!

One last reminder: check your lubricants!

Your compressor's fluid is instrumental in sealing, dissipating heat and lubricating. If your lubricant degrades, the running temperature of the air end will drastically increase and could lead to a catastrophic failure and halt your production of air altogether. A simple visual check to ensure your lubricant hasn't gone milky will help you determine whether a fluid change may be imminent. Also make sure your lubricant is sufficiently topped up, again, to reduce those risks of overheating and damage to the heart of your compressor: its air end.

