

Rum Runner Dive Shop

Regulator Cleaning Tips

Your regulator set is your LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEM underwater and as such you need to take care of it. It is also an expensive piece of equipment that with proper care can last many years. Regulators that are not cleaned properly and serviced regularly have a higher chance of failure when you need them most - at depth. It is not difficult to keep your regulator clean, but it is important to clean it properly.

When cleaning your regulator after a day of diving, the goal is to get rid of the sand and salt. Salt crystals can form as salt water dries, and crystals or sand on valve seats can cause your regulator to leak. Salt also promotes corrosion of metal parts. Do this at the end of each day's diving, if you can, or at least when you return home from your dive trip:

- Pull back hose protectors so you can wash the hose connections to the first stage.
- If you have a tank, mount the regulator to it and turn on the air to pressurize. While hosing or soaking the regulator, press the purge button to wash inside the second stage.
- If you don't have a tank, be sure the regulator's dust cap is firmly in place so water doesn't get into the first stage. While hosing or soaking, do not press the purge button. Without air pressure in the hoses, water will enter.
- Pay attention to washing all swivels and hose connections as well as the auto inflate quick-connect fitting.
- Flush through the mouthpiece and out the exhaust tee. If you're soaking the regulator, shake the second stage to swirl water through the exhaust tee.
- Spread the regulator and hoses in the shade to dry, do not dry in direct sunlight. Shake the water out of the exhaust tee of each second stage. Don't hang your regulator from a hook unless you can do so without straining the hoses. If you've used a tank, remember to dry the dust cap before replacing it.

Water in your first stage - now what?

- **Oops.** You forgot to replace the dust cap and squirted a little water into the first stage. Can you just leave it in the sun to dry or something else?
- **Afraid not.** You'll have to take your regulator to a dive shop for professional help. You may think just a few drops got inside, but you

don't know that for sure. Nor do you know if your drying efforts will work. Though salt water inside is much worse than fresh, small amounts of either can cause enough oxidation to interfere with the close tolerances in the first stage.

- **Resist the temptation to take the regulator apart yourself.** Special tools and training are required. Remember, this is life-support equipment.
- **Act sooner rather than later.** If you can get your regulator to the shop before corrosion has a chance to take hold, you may need no more than a simple disassembly, drying and reassembly.

Storing your regulator:

- The best way to store your regulator is coiled loosely lying on a shelf in a climate controlled environment away from dust, rodents and insects. Your attic or garage probably doesn't meet these criteria. Resist storing your regulators in a padded regulator bag. These bags are great for transporting your life support equipment, but they do not allow for air to circulate and tend to force your hoses into tight coils that may put undue strain on the flexible materials leading to premature failure.
- **When in doubt call the shop.** We would be happy to answer any questions you might have.
- **Don't forget the appropriate in-shop service interval recommended by your regulator's manufacturer.**

In summary, a simple cleaning ritual after each day of diving will keep your regulators working properly for years to come.

For more information check out www.rumrunnerdiveshop.com or email us at diving@rumrunnerdiveshop.com.