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Are there recommended protocols for a failed test? Should the unit be shut down until reshocking and testing?

As a matter of policy, *Ask OSAP* does not review, evaluate, certify, recommend or endorse products. *Ask OSAP* is also not in the position to provide technical support for specific products. If you have further questions about procedures and your dental unit and dental unit waterlines, it is recommended that you consult with the manufacturer's written instruction manual and/or contact the manufacturer of your product directly. The manufacturer's validated Instructions for Use (IFU) should be able to provide you with guidance on this matter.

Ask OSAP can provide you with some general information on this topic.

In 2018, OSAP issued a White Paper pertaining to Dental Unit Water Quality¹. A copy of this document is attached. It states in part:

*Dentists should contact the manufacturer of their dental equipment or water treatment products for specific guidance and instructions on methods to improve and maintain the quality of dental procedure water.*¹

And,

Frequency recommendations for monitoring, inspection, maintenance, and replacement of dental units and water treatment products:

- *Review information from the manufacturer of the equipment or device providing dental procedural water for patients and from the manufacturer of the device or germicide for controlling dental procedural water quality for recommendations for frequency for monitoring*

dental procedural water quality, as well as inspection and maintenance of devices.

- *When there are no manufacturer directions available for dental units (e.g., older equipment), OSAP recommends that periodic monitoring and inspection should be performed according to directions for use provided by the treatment product manufacturer or at least monthly on each dental unit or device.*
- *OSAP recommends that periodic monitoring and inspection should be performed at least monthly on each dental unit or device following the installation of treatment devices or the initiation of new protocols.*
- *If monitoring results indicate that water quality is acceptable for two consecutive monthly cycles, the frequency of testing may be reduced, but should not be less than every three months.*
- *When a dental unit exceeds the action limit for an initial or periodic test, the unit should be treated according to manufacturer IFU and re-tested immediately after treatment.* ¹

And,

SOPs for monitoring and documenting dental procedural water quality should be based on manufacturer IFUs and standard methods for microbiological analysis of water including:

- *Type and frequency of monitoring (e.g. in-office chairside test kits or external laboratory services)*
- *Instructions for all steps to be performed within the clinic including:*
 - *Sample collection including labeling to specify the source (unit, handpiece, three-way syringe, etc.) and date/time collected.*
 - *Germicide neutralization if indicated*
 - *Storage and shipping including the need for refrigeration if applicable*
 - *In-office test kit procedure if applicable*
- *Action limits and recommended interventions when test results exceed recommended levels*
 - *Instructions for documenting monitoring results including*
 - *Source, date, and time of sample collection*
 - *Identity of person performing monitoring*
 - *Date and method of analysis*
 - *Test results*
 - *Remediation efforts for failed tests and follow-up test results including removal and return to service of units where indicated*
- *Where documentation of monitoring results is to be maintained* ¹

The CDC maintains a webpage for FAQs pertaining to Dental Unit Water Quality which can be accessed at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/faqs/dental-unit-water-quality.html> ²

This webpage states in part:

*Monitoring dental unit water quality can help identify problems in performance or compliance with maintenance protocols and also provides documentation. Follow recommendations for monitoring water quality provided by the manufacturer of the unit or waterline treatment product. Commercial self-contained test kits or water-testing laboratories are available for this purpose.*²

The CDC also maintains another webpage pertaining to Dental Unit Water Quality which can be accessed at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/summary-infection-prevention-practices/dental-unit-water-quality.htm> |³

This webpage states in part:

*Consult with the dental unit manufacturer for appropriate water maintenance methods and recommendations for monitoring dental water quality.*³

In summary, if you have further questions after consulting with the manufacturer's written IFU, it is recommended that you contact the dental unit manufacturer directly for further information.

Resources

- 1) Journal of Dental Infection Control and Safety. [Dental Unit Water Quality: Organization For Safety, Asepsis And Prevention White Paper And Recommendations–2018](#). Accessed on March 5, 2019.

2) U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Dental Unit Water Quality. <https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/faqs/dental-unit-water-quality.html>

Accessed on March 5, 2019 U.S.

3) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Dental Unit Water Quality. <https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/summary-infection-prevention-practices/dental-unit-water-quality.html>

Accessed on

March 5, 2019.