

Aqua Phase

Equipment Washer Buyers' Guide



**Get all the facts ... BEFORE you invest
in any means to wash your medical
equipment & accessories!**

Automatic ease of operation and durability are keys to the popularity of *Aqua Phase*. Connect two hoses, plug in the *Aqua Phase*, push the start button, and you are on your way to saving over 60% of your labor cleaning costs. *Aqua Phase*'s stainless steel construction and high-grade components lead to long lasting, trouble free operation.

- * **A** DVANTAGES within infection control protocols.
 - * **Q** UALITY craftsmanship and components.
 - * **U** NIQUE cleaning systems, especially with wheelchairs.
 - * **A** BILITY to be customized to your needs.

 - * **P** ROVEN and tested effectiveness for over **10** years.
 - * **H** ANDS-FREE operation & ergonomically designed.
 - * **A** FFORDABLE line of models to choose from.
 - * **S** AVES you time and money with reduced labor costs.
 - * **E** ASY to hookup and portable.
-

You know that advertising claims are sometimes ambiguous. Certain claims and comparisons that are made must be evaluated for accuracy and authenticity. It is no different with medical equipment/wheelchair washers. Purchase of a medical equipment washer requires careful consideration.

As with any large capital equipment purchase, you want to be certain that you are making the right decision based on facts and common sense **BEFORE** committing yourself and your facility.

This guide contains a number of questions to ask and ponder. With answers to these questions, you can be sure that you have made the right choice for your facility. We are confident that, based on facts and common sense, the best choice is *Aqua Phase*.

With varying features and price levels, *Aqua Phase* fits into every facility's cleaning protocol and budget. Combined with the Disinfectant Application System, the Equipment Rack for large items, and Utility Trays for smaller items, *Aqua Phase* can be a powerful tool within your cleaning and infection control protocols.

Aqua Phase

Equipment Washer Buyers' Guide



Following are key questions to ask *and get answered* - before you buy:

Question:

How many wheelchairs does the manufacturer claim you can wash at one time? Do items stacked on top of each other or squeezed together actually get cleaned?

Answer:

- The physical size of a washer determines how many wheelchairs can be placed inside. Based on the physical size of *Aqua Phase* models AQ-F250 Sprite through the AQ-3000, it is possible to load two wheelchairs into the wash chamber at one time.

But, just being able to get a wheelchair into the washer does not mean it's going to be properly cleaned and sanitized.

Folded wheelchairs are very similar to dishes that have been stacked in a dishwasher - one on top of the other. Would you stack two bowls, one directly on top of the other, in your dishwasher and expect them to be cleaned?

On a wheelchair, the seat, the back, and the arms have the highest level of contamination. When you collapse a wheelchair you have vinyl against vinyl. The middle of the chair is not going to get properly cleaned if it is collapsed. If you question this, try a "peanut butter test". Put peanut butter on the collapsed chair(s) and see how much will remain untouched after washing.

- At *Aqua Phase*, we believe in using the right tool to do the job. *Aqua Phase* models AQ-F250 Sprite through the AQ-3000 are designed to wash one wheelchair at a time. The positioning of a wheelchair inside the washer is taken into consideration in the design and the engineering. The location and the number of spray jets are designed to provide thorough cleaning of **all** surfaces.

Models AQ-1000 through AQ-3000 have unique adaptations available for washing wheelchairs, called the "Wheelchair Wheel Rotation System":

- The Wheelchair Wheel Rotation System rotates the front & rear wheels of a wheelchair for superior cleaning. Scrub brushes contact wheels while washing, minimizes the need for pre-treating. Also included is the Wheel Carriage Loading Rack for easy loading and unloading of wheelchairs.

If you need to wash several chairs, in a fixed time frame, the *Aqua Phase* AQ-3500 and AQ-4000 models can wash more than one chair, un-collapsed, during one cycle. These models were designed for your larger washing requirements.

Remember, being able to squeeze more than one wheelchair in does not mean it's going to be properly cleaned or sanitized.

Aqua Phase

Equipment Washer Buyers' Guide



Question:

Does the stated usage rate of cleaning solutions make sense? Would you base your purchase of a commercial washer on the stated number of washes per gallon of cleaner as compared to the actual effectiveness of the washer?

Answer:

- A good cleaner is essential for removing body oils, proteins, and carbohydrates on medical equipment. Detergent molecules are attracted to both water and oil. One end of the detergent molecule loves water and the other end loves oil (and dirt). The detergent breaks up the surface tension that usually keeps water molecules stuck together and allows the water to be free to mix with the oil. This is how detergent and water can get dirty items clean. The proper pH of the wash water is a key element for doing this.

Since most dirt is acid, the alkaline in the detergent makes it a good cleaner for common dirt. For detergents to be effective most need to have the proper pH (percentage of hydrogen) which measures acidity and alkalinity. The scale goes from 0 to 14. Seven is halfway and is neutral. It is the balance between acidity and alkalinity. A solution that is acid will read 0-6 on the scale (6 being weaker than 1) and a solution that is alkali will be 8-14 on the scale (8 being weaker than 14).

- Some units on the market are sold with claims of 300 washes per gallon of cleaner. This could be done with *Aqua Phase* as well; however, at this high level of dilution (approximately 1 part cleaner to 1,650 parts water) an effective pH level for cleaning will not be achieved. Washing an item two or three times, or hand wiping the item after a wash cycle, in order to get it clean is not efficient.

When washers are set up at laundry facilities, the water is usually tested using a titrate test. This testing ensures that the proper amount of detergent is being injected. This test serves two purposes:

1. Titrate testing prevents you from using too much detergent.
2. It ensures that you are using enough detergent so you don't have to wash the item again.

At *Aqua Phase* we have calculated the proper amount of cleaner needed to achieve the proper pH that will clean your equipment during a wash cycle.

Question:

What is really "free" with your purchase? And, why would it be free?

Answer:

- We have learned to be skeptical of things that are offered to us for free. The modern truism reads, "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!" The well-known warning of *caveat emptor* (let the buyer beware) should be on your mind when you read or hear any offer that includes the word "free" - whether that offer is for free freight, a free trial, or anything else "free".

We are offered some wonderful things that are really free: a beautiful sunrise, the music of singing birds, the feel of a cool breeze on a warm day, etc. But, manufacturers are not in business to give things away for free. The price you actually pay for your equipment includes all the "free" things a company says it's giving away.

- If you choose a "free trial" you should not feel obligated to purchase. If an item is free and it does not work, it is not free in the short- or long-term. Trials should only be used to evaluate the equipment.
- At *Aqua Phase*, we do not inflate prices so that we can give away "free" things. We could; but we don't. We do not believe that a customer should pay more for their equipment so that a customer on the other side of the country can get "free shipping".

Aqua Phase

Equipment Washer Buyers' Guide



Question:

How much does the machine weigh? What material is the wash chamber made of - stainless steel, plastic, or aluminum?

Answer:

- In evaluating your equipment washer options, your primary concern should be cleaning efficiency. The weight of the machine has little to do with cleaning ability. The lightest machines on the market are made of aluminum, yet weigh over 300 pounds! Unless you foresee a need (or have a weird desire) to manually lift the entire machine off the ground, total weight is extraneous.

What is important, relative to weight, may be your need to relocate the equipment. The facts are simple: the bigger the wheels, the easier the washer will move. On smooth flooring, with 10 pounds of force, *Aqua Phase* models can easily be moved and relocated. Because *Aqua Phase* washers move so easily, the rear caster wheels are equipped with brakes.

- *Aqua Phase* washers are constructed of high-grade stainless steel. The wash chamber, the doors, the cabinets, the spray arms, etc, use various gauges (thickness) of stainless steel ranging from 12 gauge to 18 gauge. Stainless steel is used because it lasts and can withstand the repeated demands.

Stainless steel is heavy compared to plastic or aluminum. But, there was a time when the weight of a piece of equipment also indicated the quality of its construction. There are obvious reasons why stainless steel is used throughout food, beverage, and dairy processing plants across the world.

All of the following questions need to be answered to your satisfaction during your process of evaluating differing options for washing your wheelchairs and other medical equipment.

Questions:

- Does the manufacturer you are considering make other related commercial products for other industrial applications? How much experience do they have in making this type of equipment?
- Do the spray arms oscillate or are they fixed? When was the last time you saw commercial washing equipment that had the majority of the spray arms fixed in one location?
- What material are the spray arms made of - stainless steel or plastic? At any time have you seen or purchased commercial washing equipment that used plastic or hose for the spray arms?
- What material is used to hold the spray nozzles - stainless steel or plastic? Have you ever seen commercial washing equipment using plastic pipe or hoses to hold the spray nozzles?
- Does the company make more than one model? Why does one company produce TEN standard models that can be customized?
- Is technical information printed and ready for your review? How much information can you get on the Internet? Why does one company have so much information and others so little?

With answers to these questions, you can be sure you made the right choice for your facility.
Based on construction, components, performance, and price, *Aqua Phase* comes out ahead.