

Irrigation System Preventative Maintenance

Planting and spraying season is upon us, and as farmers plan for irrigating crops this summer, farmers need to consider what they are asking of the center pivots around the countryside. The pivot is the only piece of machinery that a farmer owns that sits out in the elements 365 days a year. The pivot does not get the opportunity to spend the winter in a shed like the combine and planter. However, a pivot, like the other machinery is a substantial investment, and needs to last for many years, performing when the farmer needs it most.

Reinke Manufacturing wants to remind farmers that performing proper care of the pivot will help their bottom line by providing a greater return on investment.

“Preventative Maintenance is the key to providing reliability and longevity of your pivot system, and making sure it will run when farmers need it most.”

Todd Merryman, Reinke Manufacturing,
Manager of Technical Services

Before planting season begins, it is important to take a look at your current irrigation systems to see what preventative maintenance can be done to prevent down-time when you need your pivot to run at peak performance later in the season. Reinke Manufacturing suggests focusing on system maintenance rather than repair when failure occurs.

Always consult the maintenance section of the owner’s manual of all Reinke products to insure the reliability and longevity of every pivot. With the Reinke warranty, farmers also have the option of working with their local Reinke dealer to send out a certified technician to provide preventative maintenance while using Genuine Reinke Parts for any repairs.

In order to thoroughly inspect your irrigation system, we have put together a check list of steps to go through in order to achieve peak performance of your irrigation system. First, verify safe operating conditions of your pivot in the pre-season. Second, prevent system downtime during critical irrigation periods with minimal maintenance. Finally, extend the longevity of the system through post-season maintenance and



Reinke technicians will go through the Pre-Season Pivot Maintenance Check List with you in your field.

winterization to protect your investment. By taking these preventative steps, farmers will have confidence and peace of mind regarding the system’s reliability.

“Preventative Maintenance is less expensive than reactive maintenance for the farmer because it is done while no crop is in the field. If there is crop in the field, then there would be maintenance cost on top of crop loss.”

Hunter Walls, Walls Irrigation

The pre-season check list is generally conducted in early Spring, and includes a thorough system inspection with required corrective actions to ensure the system is in a “ready for operation condition.” External conditions such as potential damage from grazing livestock or wind and storm damage should be inspected.

Checklist for Spring Inspection

1. Verify the system electrical ground
2. Look for any structural or electrical hazards
 - a. System conditions
3. Check the pivot center
 - a. Inspect the pivot pad and anchor bolts.
 - b. Grease the pivot bearing.

4. Check gear boxes (center drive and wheel)
 - a. Remove any water condensation that has accumulated.
 - b. Fill oil level to proper level with lubricant specified in the owner's manual.
5. Check wheels and tires.
 - a. Make sure tires are inflated to the specification in the owner's manual.
 - b. Make sure all wheel lug nuts are tight.
6. Check other drive train components.
 - a. Check high torque couplers (if installed) – coupler pucks have a manufacturer's recommended 5 year service life, date of manufacture is color coded.
 - b. Grease steel u-joints (if installed).
7. Check the alignment of the system.
 - a. System alignment may need to be adjusted.
 - b. Check the alignment mechanism condition.
 - c. Micro switches used in both the alignment and safety circuits have a recommended 10 year service life.
8. Check the condition of the water carrying conduit.
 - a. Inspect the boots, clamps and gaskets.
 - b. Inspect the low pressure drains.
 - c. Inspect all components associated with the sprinklers.
 - i. Goosenecks
 - ii. Drops



Inspect the drive train including the center drive, wheel gears and tire pressure to make sure that the pivot will move properly.

- iii. Regulators
- iv. Sprinkler devices
9. Remove the sand trap and thoroughly flush the system with water.

After a thorough pre-season inspection, farmers can be confident that the pivot will run properly when it gets turned on during the long, hot days of summer. Preventative maintenance can save farmers time and money while the crops mature throughout the growing season.

“Rarely is there a problem with the pivots that we need a technician for, but it’s comforting to know they are available through our local Reinke dealers when we need one.”

Dave Koenig, Koenig Farms

For further information on Reinke pivots, or to contact a Reinke Dealer: please visit our website @ <http://www.reinke.com/find-a-dealer.html>. View our YouTube channel @Reinke Irrigation. Make sure to Like Us on Facebook @ReinkeIrrigation and Follow us on Twitter @Reinke_Irr to stay engaged with the latest Reinke content.



Inspect all components with the sprinklers to insure full psi water output during the irrigation season.



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