

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

Using the QbE™ Cleaning System for End-Face Cleaning

1. What is the QbE Cleaning System?

The QbE Cleaning System is the precision wipe platform for cleaning fiber optic end-faces. This new fiber optic cleaning device enables the user to clean fiber end-faces in either a “dry” mode, or “wet” mode using a cleaning solvent, without damaging the end-face.

2. How was the QbE Cleaning System developed?

The QbE Cleaning System was developed after three years of development with end users who expressed concerns regarding the cleaning of end-faces. The QbE Cleaning System satisfies these concerns with an easy-to-use dispensing container, which carries its own cleaning platen.

3. What advantages does the QbE Cleaning System have over other end-face cleaning methods currently in use?

Features:

- Complete fiber end-face cleaning system
- Effective “wet” or “dry” connector cleaning
- Provides the ideal cleaning surface
- Convenient size
- Heavy-duty lint-free wiping material
- Patent pending

Benefits:

- No refills to buy or investment in expensive mechanisms
- Only system that allows both cleaning options
- The QbE platen is perfect for outside plant and OEM applications
- Portable cleaning system is perfect for tool kits and has best “foot print” for workbenches
- Won’t shred or tear — tough enough to remove buffer gel, safe enough for all end-face cleaning
- Unique, easy-to-use cleaning device

4. How is the QbE Cleaning System constructed?

Each QbE Cleaning System contains 200 individual wipes on a roll. Each wipe is perforated for easy use and disposal, so there is always a clean wipe available for each end-face to be cleaned. The sides of the 3-inch cube container are reinforced, and each QbE Cleaning System comes with an attached neoprene cleaning platen. The cleaning platen insures that the cleaning process does not damage the fiber optic end-face.

5. How do I use the QbE Cleaning System?

Each individually packaged QbE Cleaning System contains detailed directions for four different cleaning operations. The user draws a clean QbE wipe over the cleaning platen, then follows the appropriate cleaning directions.

For “Dry” End-Face Cleaning:

- Pull one QbE wipe over the fiber-safe neoprene platen.
- Hold the end-face at 90 degrees, perpendicular to the platen.
- Draw the end-face lightly over the platen in a smooth linear motion.
- Do not press the end-face against the platen too hard.
- Do not draw or retrace the end-face across the same area of the wipe.
- Do not use a figure-eight motion; do not use a twist and turn motion.
- Check your work with a fiberscope or other measuring device.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

For “Wet” End-Face Cleaning:

- Lightly spot the QbE™ wipe on the platen with Electro-Wash® PX Fiber Optic Cleaner (ES810).
- Draw the end-face from the solvent wetted area across the dry area, using a smooth linear motion.
- Check your work with a fiberscope or other measuring device.

For Splice Preparation:

- Lightly moisten the QbE wipe with Electro-Wash PX Fiber Optic Cleaner and gently wipe away fiber contaminants.
- Lightly dampen a 38540ESD swab and remove soils from the V-grooves on the fusion splicer.

For Buffer Gel Removal

- Pull three single QbE wipes from the container.
- Spray a small amount of Electro-Wash PX Fiber Optic Cleaner into the folded wipes.
- Pull the cable through the first wipe and discard the wipe.
- Repeat until the cable “squeaks” clean.

6. What makes the QbE Cleaning System unique?

The QbE Cleaning System container has double-walled, reinforced sides for extra durability, while the roll of lint-free wipes is wound around a center core that adds extra stability to the container as the roll is unwound. The large surface area of each individual QbE wipe provides enough space to clean two or even three fiber end-faces, so you can clean up to 600 end-faces with one QbE Cleaning System. Since the cleaning platen comes new with each QbE Cleaning System purchased, there’s no chance the platen will dry out and become hard before the unit is exhausted. This means less chance of damaging the end-face by rubbing it across a dried-out, hardened rubber surface. The unique design of the QbE Cleaning System is currently patent pending.

7. Can cleaning solvents be used with the QbE Cleaning System?

The QbE Cleaning System is specifically designed to allow the use of solvent for a wet cleaning process, with an automatic drying step, by drawing the end-face across the wipe from the solvent-wetted region to the dry part of the wipe. One can of Electro-Wash PX Fiber Optic Cleaner (ES810) will deliver between 200 and 400 “shots” of cleaner, to match the 200 to 400 uses available from each QbE wipe. Presaturated Electro-Wash MX wipes are also a good source of cleaning solvent for outside plant and in-field service applications. Remember, it only takes a small amount of either solvent product to clean the fiber optic end-face or the ferrule material.

8. What are the differences between reel cleaners and the QbE Cleaning System?

There are many differences between the QbE Cleaning System and other cleaning systems presently being used in the industry. Some of the most obvious ones are:

- Reel cleaners limit the user to a very small cleaning surface, usually only 0.75” x 1.0”, so they recommend “giving the end-face a quarter turn, then drawing it along the cleaner surface”. If there is hard grit on the end-face the “quarter turn” motion could result in scratching the end-face. The QbE Cleaning System uses a straight line cleaning motion which greatly reduces the chance of damaging the end-face. Further, since the QbE Cleaning System is designed for use with solvent in a “wet” cleaning process, the end-face is lubricated and less likely to be scratched. Three passes of the end-face across the QbE wipe and the end-face is completely clean, with far less possibility of damage or scratching.
- The conventional solvent used for cleaning end-faces is isopropyl alcohol (IPA), normally dispensed from squeeze-type dispensers. IPA is very hygroscopic, absorbing moisture from the air very readily. The absorbed moisture dilutes the cleaner and is then deposited on the end-face, which must then be dried. Electro-Wash PX Fiber Optic Cleaner is an aerosol package, so there’s no way for it to be contaminated with atmospheric moisture.

Frequently Asked Questions

- Some reel cleaner systems advise using a “figure eight motion” when passing the end-face across the narrow cleaning window. This motion is fine for polishing end-face surfaces, but when cleaning this motion produces drag, which can lead to linting of the cleaning surface. The larger QbE™ wipe area makes such a cleaning motion unnecessary, so there’s no chance of generating lint when cleaning with the QbE wipe.
- Each QbE Cleaning System carries detailed instructions for performing the four most common cleaning procedures used in the industry. Other cleaning systems usually have separate instruction sheets, and sometimes no instructions at all.

For more information, contact:

ITW Chemtronics
8125 Cobb Center Drive
Kennesaw, GA 30152-4386
Tel: 800-645-5244
Fax: 800-243-6003
www.chemtronics.com

This information is believed to be accurate. It is intended for professional end users having the skills to evaluate and use the data properly. ITW Chemtronics does not guarantee the accuracy of the data and assumes no liability in connection with damages incurred while using it.

QbE is a trademark of ITW Chemtronics. Electro-Wash® is a registered trademark of ITW Chemtronics.
©2005 ITW Chemtronics all rights reserved.