



Fiber Optic Technical Notes

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Why Fiber Optic Ports Need to Be Cleaned Every Time They Are Mated

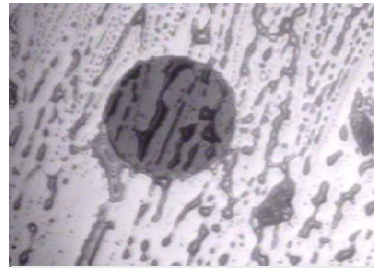
By Harvey Stone, Product Manager, MicroCare Corp.

CLETOPS® cartridge cleaners are designed to clean exposed connector end-faces (i.e., fiber optic jumpers). However, there are two sides to every fiber optic connection. Cleaning only one side will result in a 50% chance of the connection performing properly, but 50% chance there could be trouble. In one particular study, a major network system manufacturer stated that more than 30% of the optical boards returned from the field for expensive warranty repairs were found to have only one problem: contaminated optical ports. Proper cleaning would have saved time and money and greatly reduced those warranty costs.

The pictures below tell the story. Here's a clean connector and a dirty connector...



Clean fiber optic jumper

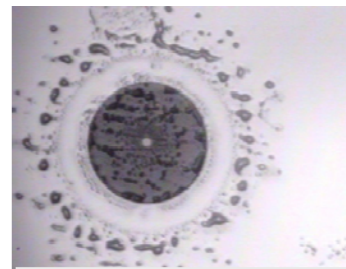


Contaminated end-face

When the two are mated....



Optical port after mating



Jumper after mating

Conclusion: **Contamination Migrates!** Both sides of a connection must be cleaned, every time they are opened, tested and/or reconfigured.

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This applies to brand new jumpers, right out of the bag. Sticklers™ research into hands-on field practices suggested that more than 33% of all new patch cords are sufficiently contaminated as to degrade the network. This is true even when the patch cord is coming right out of the bag, and the dust caps are still in place.

In summary: More than 50% of optical network failures are due to contamination. To keep repair costs low, customer satisfaction high and networks fast, it makes sense to clean every connection, every time, both jumpers and ports.

For more details, visit www.SticklersCleaners.com and search for “dust caps”, “wet-dry”, “cleaning ports” and other related terms.