Guideline | Cleaning guide

1. Introduction

In most cases, maintaining a Filcoflex B.V. product requires only routine maintenance. The materials used in the manufacture of our air-permeable fabrics will naturally wear over time through regular use. However, proper care and maintenance will help to maximise the product's service life.

When assembling or disassembling Filcoflex B.V. products, please use only the tools specifically designed or recommended for this purpose. Avoid using sharp objects to pry or pierce any part of the product, as this may cause damage.

If you experience any difficulties removing parts of the assembly, please contact Filcoflex B.V. Our team will be happy to advise you on suitable and safe tools and/or provide practical tips to help you complete the task.

For hygiene and optimal performance, Filcoflex B.V. recommends replacing its products at regular intervals.

Filcoflex B.V. also offers a disposable solution for connecting breather bags. This provides a cost-effective, hygienic and easy-to-use alternative. Please contact us for further information.



Woven fabric (uncoated) - Flexible connector



Polyester needle felt - Breather bag and filter sock

2. Manual cleaning

2.1 Woven fabric (uncoated)

- Agitate the product in a bath of warm water mixed with a mild detergent and/or disinfectant.
- If the contamination consists of milk powder or other protein-based substances, soak the product for approximately 9 to 12 hours in a 0,6% enzyme-based detergent solution.
- Rinse the woven fabric using a low-pressure hose and/or a fresh water bath.
- If additional sanitisation is required, immerse the product in a suitable sanitising solution.
- Allow excess water to drain from the product.
- Dry the woven fabric thoroughly before reuse.

2.2 Polyester needle felt

Products made from polyester needle felt can be washed manually using the same method as is described for woven fabrics. However, this is not recommended.

The filter media has a dust-release surface that helps maintain its filtration efficiency and promotes the release of dust and powder. Washing the material using the method described for woven fabrics may deteriorate this surface and negatively affect its performance.

The following alternative cleaning methods are recommended:

- **Compressed air:** Using a compressed air gun, blow dust or powder off the filter media from the outside inwards. This is the reverse direction of normal operation.
- **Vacuum cleaning:** A vacuum cleaner can be used to remove dust and powder from the polyester needle felt.
- **Mechanical cleaning:** Shaking, gently knocking or brushing the material can also help to remove dust and powder from the filter media surface.



2.3 Metal parts

The easiest and most effective way to clean metal parts, such as flanges, fittings, seals, gaskets, spigots and clamps, is to use ethanol or isopropyl alcohol (IPA).

3. Clean In Place (CIP)

3.1 Woven fabric (uncoated)

Products made from uncoated woven fabric are permeable and therefore allow liquids to pass through the material. This is particularly relevant when the products are exposed to pressure during a Clean-in-Place (CIP) process.

For this reason, pressurised fluid cleaning and CIP cleaning are generally not recommended.

If CIP cleaning is essential for your process, it may be possible to use this method. However, please be aware that the material is porous and will allow liquids to pass through.

3.2 Polyester needle felt

Cleaning products made from polyester needle felt using a CIP process is not recommended.

The filter media has a dust-release surface that helps maintain filtration efficiency and promotes the release of dust and powder. This surface may deteriorate when exposed to CIP cleaning.

As a result, the filtration performance of the polyester needle felt product may decrease with each CIP cleaning cycle.

3.3 CIP restrictions

If your CIP cleaning process involves the use of chemicals, Filcoflex recommends not exceeding the following maximum concentrations:

- **Acid:** No more than 0,8%
- **Caustic:** No more than 1,5%

Higher concentrations will not improve the cleaning efficiency or provide any additional benefits. They may also cause damage to other components, such as gaskets, seals and flexible sleeves.

3.4 After the CIP process

- Always wipe down the product after CIP cleaning.
- Filcoflex B.V. recommends removing all products after a CIP cleaning cycle to ensure that any residual chemicals are removed from both the inside and outside surfaces.
- Before reinstalling the product, thoroughly clean all mating flanges, pipe ends, spigots and ferrules

4. Cleaning notes

Always ensure that your woven fabric or polyester needle felt product is completely dry before installing it back into operation. This will help prevent dust or powder from sticking to the surface and building up inside the product over time.