

Care & Handling

Cooler Troubleshooting

By Allen Jett and Craig Richert

THERE'S NOTHING WORSE THAN PAYING FOR A service call only to discover that you could have fixed the problem without outside help. Here's some trouble-shooting guidance, courtesy of SRC Refrigeration, to help you tackle cooler problems first, before dialing for your local service representative.

My cooler is blowing warm air!

First, visually inspect the evaporator coil. If the fins are iced over, then either shut the display down completely, or adjust the temperature to the warmest position (if you have an SRC Series I display cooler, don't do this). Leave the display alone until the evaporator coil is completely free of ice. This may take a while, if the build-up was heavy. As the ice melts, there may be excess condensate water to deal with. Never attempt to manually defrost or remove built-up ice by hand or with tools. Once clear, reset the temperature control to the correct range. If the problem persists, place a service call.

My flowers are freezing!

There are three processes you should follow:

- 1) Air directly exiting the evaporator coil is approximately 10 degrees colder than the overall temperature in your cabinet. Arrangements placed too close to the coil may be damaged. Fix this by adjusting your shelving positions, or adjust the temperature to warm the overall display.
- 2) Perform routine maintenance, making sure that the condenser coil is clean.
- 3) Make a slight temperature adjustment to warm the cabinet a few degrees. If there is no change, and the compressor is running continuously, you may need to replace your temperature control. Place a service call to have your display examined.

My glass doors are sweating!

At any given temperature, air can hold a certain quantity of water in the form of vapor. Warm air can hold much more

water vapor than cold air. The amount of moisture in the air is expressed as a percentage, referred to as the Relative Humidity (RH). Totally dry air would have 0 percent RH. Air that is totally saturated, and can hold no more vapor, would be at 100 percent RH.

Raising the temperature in the display case will also raise the surface temperature of the doors. If the air conditioning is on a nighttime setback, you may just need to clean the doors off first thing in the morning. As the air conditioning begins to operate, the problem may go away. Some other possible culprits to check:

- A colder setting on the air conditioning may pull more moisture from the air, lowering the dew point below the door temperature.
- If your air conditioning thermostat actually is in a separate space or room from the cooler doors, then it is not controlling the area you need controlled.
- Make sure there's proper air supply and return distribution in the room, to properly condition the air, and that the air conditioning system is sized correctly for your building.
- Refrain from leaving outside doors open — even if you want to take advantage of the cooler weather outdoors.

If you exhaust all other solutions, and the problem is more than you can accept, then the final (most expensive) option would be to replace your present doors with new heated, glass doors to compensate for the ambient conditions.

My doors lights flicker!

Have you plugged the display cooler into an extension cord? Flickering lights can be a symptom of low voltage. There can be a voltage drop if the display is plugged into an improper extension cord. A few other things to check:

- Check to see if the polarity of your receptacle is correct. Reversed polarity can cause malfunctioning of electronic ballasts.
- Are you using fresh bulbs? Aged fluorescent bulbs, especially ones with darkened ends, should be replaced. If not, they can hasten ballast failure. It is best to change all the bulbs at one time, rather than one at a time as they burn out.
- If only one bulb is flashing, make sure that all the bulbs are firmly seated in their sockets. Try swapping the flickering bulb with another and see if the same socket is still flickering, or if the bulb itself is bad.

If you rule out all of the steps above, then it may be time to place a service call for an electrician to check the circuit out. 🌟

Special thanks to **Allen Jett** and **Craig Richert**, at SRC Refrigeration, www.src.us, for providing this information.



Info To Go

Cooler Q&A

Get guidance on smart cooler upkeep, to keep flowers in top condition, by clicking on the Info to Go logo on the home page of SAF's member Web site, www.safnow.org. Or get it via SAF's Fast Fax, by calling (888) 723-2000 and requesting document #850.

More Troubleshooting

For more details on troubleshooting cooler problems, visit www.src.com's FAQs.