



Rules of Thumb And other information You never thought to ask

How clean can a sweeper get it?

Broom street sweepers are simply a spinning broom that flicks loose debris onto a conveyor belt. The conveyor then carries the debris up into a hopper. The cleaning is just like a push broom sweeping onto a dustpan, only bigger. It doesn't sweep any better than a push broom; it only covers a lot more ground.

When is it too heavy to sweep?

Using the push broom analogy: if you were going to do the job by hand, would you use a shovel first? If so the job needs a tractor first. If it is ready for the push broom, it is also ready for the street sweeper. On the same thought, when the sweeper is done, it is now ready for the water truck.

Our operators will get out of the truck and use a shovel if needed. This does tend to be a very expensive laborer however. Besides the obvious tractor work, having the site clear of debris larger than your fist and/or shipping straps may save you some money as our operator will not have to hand pick the site.

Don't sweepers use water to clean?

No, sweepers only use water to control dust. It is a very common misconception that the water does any cleaning. If you were to push broom off the sidewalks, would you want them sprinkled first?

Can Sweepers sweep dry?

Only if you want to get fined by AQMD for a fugitive dust violation, or have problems with OSHA by asking the operator to disable or not use the safety device designed to minimize the dust he has to breathe.

Unfortunately, many sweepers do use too much water. Once the dust is under control and the pavement is damp we will turn down or turn off the water. The last thing anyone wants is a muddy mess. However, when the street dries out or *any* dust is visible, the water must be turned back on.

Can sweepers remove the stain off the street?

Just like the 1st rule of thumb, brooms can only remove what is loose. Staining or discoloration is simply not removable with a push broom or a mechanical broom.

Why do sweepers cost so much?

Many years ago there was an old rule of thumb that basically said a piece of equipment should rent for 1,000th of its purchase price. i.e. \$60,000 backhoe would go for \$60 an hour, a \$200,000 scraper would get \$200 an hour. New sweepers now cost \$140-160,000. Add in the increases in liability and workers comp., sweepers should be about \$170 per hour. As it is, an operated 10-ton sweeper probably costs you less per hour than your plumber or copier repairman.

Why can't sweepers bring their own water?

The water only lasts about an hour. We are also not always coming from a site that will allow us to take water that will not be used on their site.