The following instructions explain how to use cleaning cartridges on an Epson Stylus Pro 7880/9880. Cleaning cartridges provide an ideal method of flushing out a printer when changing ink types or preparing the machine for storage during periods of non-use. They are also a handy service aid for unblocking partially clogged print heads. However, they will not unblock a completely clogged print head as there is no way for the cleaning fluid to travel through the ink system to get to the dried ink in the print head. Because of this, cleaning cartridge should only be used when some jets on each print head are working – the working jets will allow the cleaning fluid to travel through the ink system and dissolve the dried inks in the clogged jets.

Cleaning cartridges for the Epson Pro 7880/9880 are filled with Ink2image Dead Head cleaning and are installed in a printer just like regular cartridges. To prime the printer with cleaning fluid, the printer firmware has a handy built-in 'initial fill' routine that will fill the machine's ink system with cleaning fluid or ink. This initial fill routine fills all channels on the printer with fluid and, unfortunately, there is no way to set colors to be filled individually. Because of this, we recommend installing cleaning cartridges in all channels even if you only want to clean one or two colors. You can install cleaning cartridges individually on a machine, but you will need ink cartridges in the other channels for the printer to operate an initial fill, and the routine will draw ink from these other channels. Because cleaning cartridges are less expensive than ink cartridges, it is normally more economical to install cleaning cartridges in every channel rather than waste ink.

Note: The Epson Pro 7880 and 9880 unfortunately have a firmware setting built in that detects any non–Epson cartridges and issues two warnings on the printer display. The operator has to agree with these warnings before the cartridges can be used. This firmware setting can't be removed or changed. The process of agreeing with these warnings is as follows.

When you install a non-Epson cartridge in the printer and push down the cartridge locking levers, the display will show a 'Non genuine Cartridge' warning and will ask you to agree with this warning. Press the left arrow key to do so. The display will then show another warning message about warranties and press the left arrow key again to 'accept' this warning. After a few seconds the display will say 'READY' with the cartridge level indicators grayed out. The cartridges are now able to be used.

Unfortunately, cartridge ink levels are not shown on the printer display or in the driver software when using non-Epson cartridges on the Epson Pro 7880 and 9880. However, the inks levels are still monitored by the printer and will stop the machine before a cartridge runs dry – the display will read 'REPLACE INK CART'. When this happens, simply lifting the cartridge locking levers and pushing them back down will indicate which cartridge is empty.

The process of cleaning or flushing a printer is as follows:-

1. Install the cleaning cartridges and run an 'initial fill' routine (see instructions below).
2. Ideally, leave the printer to 'soak' overnight to allow the cleaning fluid to dissolve any dried ink deposits.

3. If you have flushed the printer for long term storage purposes, then it is now OK to place the machine in storage. The next time you want to user the machine, turn it on and install ink cartridges as in 5 below.
4. Install ink cartridges and run another initial fill routine. After the routine has finished, perform nozzle check prints and cleanings as necessary until you get a good nozzle check.

Cleaning cartridges can be kept and re-used if cleaning/flushing is required again. A set of 220 ml size cleaning cartridges are good for four cleanings.

RUNNING AN INITIAL FILL ROUTINE

The printer has a handy initial fill routine built into the firmware that fills the machine's ink system with inks or cleaning fluid. The routine is very simple to set and use. You should always bear in mind that the maintenance tank will need at least 25% capacity remaining in order to run the routine. If the maintenance tank is nearly full then the printer will not allow you to run the initial fill, and an empty tank will need to be installed before the routine can be performed.

Setting the initial fill routine

Start with the printer turned off.

1. Press and hold the "Down", "Right" and "Enter" buttons and then press the power on button.
2. After the printer powers up, release the "Down", "Right" and "Enter" buttons. Display should show that you are in Self Test mode.
3. Using the "Down" button, navigate to the "Parameter" menu, and press the "Right" button.
4. Using the "Down" button, navigate to the "Update" menu, and press the "Right" button.
5. Using the "Down" button, navigate to "InkParameter", and press the "Right" button.

Note: The printer will always display "SET". This does not mean that the Initial fill routine is set.

Using the "Down" button, change the displayed value to "Set" and press the "Enter" button to TURN ON the Initial fill routine.

The printer will display "Update Param?"

Press the "Enter' button.

Turn the printer off by pressing the power button.

Running the initial fill routine

The next time you turn the machine on, the display will prompt you to install cartridges. After you have installed all the cartridges and pushed down the cartridge locking levers, the display will tell you that an initial fill routine is ready to run and tells you to start the routine by pressing the pause button. Press the pause button and the machine will start running the initial fill routine and the display will show a % figure indicating the progress of the routine which takes about ten minutes. You will need to be present during the running of the routine as the display will prompt you to lift the cartridge locking levers up and down several times during the process. When the routine has finished, the display will read 'ready'.