National Foam®

Foam Lines

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Help! Our Foam Has Gelled

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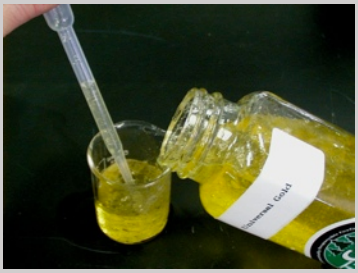
AR-AFFF foam concentrate, will present as a gel-like goo. The thicker stuff is likely to have more alcohol resistant polymer in it, giving it longer post fire residence time and long lasting vapor suppression on hot spills. If it is gel-like throughout, with no semi-hard, polymeric masses, I would say you're good to go. If masses are present, this means regular AFFF or class A concentrate have co-mingled with AR-AFFF, which is usually system fatal, as the poly-mass tends to foul system strainers, metering valves and supply plumbing. In the case of electric class A / B systems, the class A foam strainer will likely be plugged as will an onboard eductor's metering valve.

It's near impossible to determine if your foam concentrate tank is contaminated, as it's likely the poly-mass has ended up at the bottom of your foam tank. A cup of AR-AFFF in your class A tank is system fatal, and will, in most cases require that the contaminated foam be pumped out from the fill hatch.

Warm Water Flush - (Fill the tank slowly from bottom up)
After draining all you can from the foam tank, try running a tank of warm water through the system. If it empties, you're good to go. If not, disconnect the system supply line from your foam pump or eductor metering valve, as you will need to run warm through the open system plumbing till you are sure all the mess is past. If your system is so equipped, clean the system strainer before any irrigation process commences.

Once the concentrate tank is drained, refill it with fresh water and run the system till the tank is empty. Only then can you refill it with the proper foam. What foam? That depends on the system.

Test for fitness by using an eye-dropper or pipette, If it lifts, it's okay... Although it may not gravity feed so well, eductors are okay with the thickest of AR-AFFFs.



AR-AFFF co-mingled with AFFF or Class A concentrate will often present with a system fatal polymeric mass like this.

If it is a system without a positive displacement pump, avoid AR-AFFF, as viscosity is likely be too high to proportion accurately. You may make bubbles but probably not enough to pass a UL Fire test. Note that most low viscosity AR-AFFF's are not UL listed on gasoline blended with ethanol. FoamPro has developed a system for AR-AFFF called the 3000 series. This system, along with the Pierce Husky®, Hale FoamLogix® and NF's Servo-Command® are bullet proof using all known foam concentrates and operate fine with Universal Gold 1-3% AR-AFFF. If you have a simple foam eductor system, around the pump (ATP) system or a balanced pressure system you should be okay regardless of foam concentrate or it's viscosity.
Finally, you can, run a 1" class B hose from the foam tank to a valved, pump panel connection and use a self-flushing foam eductor on a nearby discharge for those times when you are betting lives on foam proportioning accuracy.