

Preventative and Normal Maintenance

CLEANING THE INFLATABLE

It's best to put a protective coating of 303 Protectant on a brand new raft. It works as a coating that doesn't allow dirt to adhere as much. Hypalon is very resistant to most chemicals so the worst a heavy duty cleaner can usually do is bleach the pigment, which doesn't effect the Hypalon. Fortunately there are inflatable cleaners on the market that clean the surface and don't harm it. Use a large scrub pad with handle and work in four foot sections. Rinse the boat off with a power washer then spray the cleaner on and wait five minutes. Using a circular motion, scrub the area and then fully rinse immediately. The boat will appear to be faded, but a coat of 303 Protectant will bring back the shine.

PROPER INFLATION

The boat should only have a maximum of 3 PSI (pounds per square inch) so it is far less than a bike or car tire.

Using a compressor that will put out high volumes of air will over pressure a tube instantly. Make sure whatever you use has a maximum 3 PSI output.

BAFFLES

Each chamber has a cone shaped baffle that separates it from the others.

Maximizing pressure on a single baffle can easily damage it.

Therefore equal amounts of pressure should be applied to each chamber until you reach maximum pressure.

Do the opposite when you deflate a boat.

Ideally it would be best to have someone at each of the chambers and open at the same time.

PRESSURE GAUGE

Have a pressure gauge handy so staff can take a reading when they are inflating.

The air temperature and that of sand and asphalt in mid day can more than double the pressure in a boat.

Make a habit of keeping boats in the shade and or deflating them on occasion.

Keep in mind that you must release equal pressure or you'll harm the baffles.

TIE DOWNS/TRAILERING

Moving the boats has been known to cause more damage than usage on the river unless it is closely monitored.

Using the handles as tie-downs, abrasive ropes rubbing on the tubes, and the biggest culprit of all, tossing the boats to the ground!

PROTECTANT

Originally intended by American Propeller Co to protect rubber and vinyl airplane parts from high altitude UV, it is ideally suited for inflatable protection. Given that Hypalon is used to coat high power wires and reservoirs, it has incredible UV resistance. We have found that it helps reduce pigment fading, leaves a layer that is easier to clean dirt off and prolongs the life of the boat. We highly recommend it on a new boat and then once at the start, middle and end of the season prior to cleaning and storage.