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CMC RESCUE TECHNICAL REPORTS



CLEANING ROPE RESCUE EQUIPMENT

All rope rescue equipment should be kept clean and free of dirt and grit to prevent wear that will reduce the strength, effectiveness and lifespan of the equipment. After the equipment has been cleaned, remember to mark it again if necessary and log that it has been cleaned.

ROPE AND WEBBING

The CMC Rescue School uses the following procedure to wash ropes. Rinse off any excess dirt with a hose. Then soak the rope for about 30 minutes in a plastic tub of water with LifeLine Cleaner added. Rinse the rope by pulling it through a rope washer twice. Then hang the rope in a cool, shady place to dry.

Rope that has come into contact with blood or other body fluids can be cleaned using chlorine bleach per your department's protocols for decontaminating equipment. Our tests indicated that a 10-minute soak in a 10:1 water-bleach solution resulted in a 2% loss of strength in the rope. While this has minimal effect on the rope, the cumulative strength loss from repeated decontamination of a rope is not known. At some point, it is best to replace the rope.

SEWN GEAR

The D-rings and buckles on these tend to damage washing machines. Use LifeLine Cleaner and soak them in a tub. Light scrubbing with a brush should remove heavy dirt deposits. Rinse and air-dry the same as rope and webbing.

HARDWARE

Dirt can be wiped off of outside surfaces and hardware can be washed in warm, soapy water when necessary. Be sure to get all of the dirt out of any moving parts. Dry thoroughly. An air hose or a hair dryer can help dry hard-to-reach spots. Use of a dry or non-sticky lubricant following washing may help preserve the life and performance of your hardware. Be careful of over-lubricating, which can attract dirt.

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