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SOP: Cleaning Tap Aerators

Technical Services / Maintenance



Purpose: To maintain water flow efficiency and hygiene by regularly cleaning tap aerators in guest-facing and staff-use areas.



Frequency: Every 3–6 months (or sooner if low water pressure or uneven flow is reported).

Why this matters

Over time, tap aerators can become clogged with limescale, sediment, and other debris, especially in areas with hard water. If left uncleaned, this buildup can:

- Reduce water pressure, leading to guest complaints and inefficient handwashing or cleaning.
- Cause uneven or erratic water flow, which wastes water and makes the tap harder to use.
- Increase water consumption, as staff or guests may run taps longer to compensate for poor flow.
- Harbour bacteria or unpleasant odours, which could affect hygiene, especially in food preparation areas.
- Lead to costly repairs or replacements, if minor issues are ignored for too long.

By including aerator cleaning in regular maintenance routines, hotels can maintain consistent water efficiency, improve user experience, and reduce long-term plumbing issues.



Required Tools and Materials

- Adjustable spanner or wrench
- Soft cloth or towel
- Old toothbrush or small cleaning brush
- Bowl or container
- White vinegar or a descaling solution
- Teflon/plumber's tape. (if needed)
- PPE (gloves and eye protection)

Step 1: Preparation



- Inform relevant departments if taps will be briefly out of service.
- Gather all tools and materials.
- Wear appropriate PPE if using chemical descalers.

Step 2: Remove the Aerator



- Gently unscrew the aerator from the tap using your hand or an adjustable spanner if it's tight. Take care to avoid damaging the threads.
- Wrap the aerator in a soft cloth before using tools to avoid scratching the fitting.
- Keep all parts together, many aerators have multiple components (e.g. screen, washer, flow restrictor).

Step 3: Clean the Aerator



- Rinse all components under warm running water to remove loose debris.
- Soak the parts in a bowl of white vinegar or if necessary, descaling solution for 15–30 minutes to dissolve mineral buildup.
- Use an old toothbrush to gently scrub away remaining residue, especially around the mesh screen and internal surfaces.

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Step 4: Rinse and Reassemble

- Rinse the components thoroughly in a bowl containing clean water.
- Check for any damage (e.g. cracks, worn washers). Replace if needed.
- Reassemble the aerator parts in the correct order.

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Step 5: Reattach and Test

- Screw the aerator back onto the tap by hand, then tighten gently with a spanner if necessary.
- Turn on the tap slowly to check for leaks and ensure even water flow.
- If the water sprays unevenly or leaks at the joint, recheck assembly or add Teflon tape to the threads before reattaching.



Documentation

- Record the location, date of cleaning, and any replacements made in your Maintenance Logs.
- Note any units where replacement parts are needed and schedule follow-up if required.



Troubleshooting Tips

- If water flows unevenly after cleaning, recheck for debris or misaligned mesh.
- If an aerator is hard to remove, wrap a vinegar-soaked cloth around the fitting to loosen buildup before retrying.
- If the water flow is persistently low, check upstream filters or pipes for blockages.