

Self Cleaning Projectors? (No They Don't Exist) A Chicago Expert's Guide to Projector Maintenance

By Edward S. Lee

Your Projectors Need Regular Maintenance

The following conversation might sound familiar: "We've finally been able to secure the funding and have had projectors installed in ALL of our classrooms! The installation went great and we're off and running with our new projectors. We even have a 3 year warranty on the projectors so all that we need to do now is use them and everything will take care of itself! Life is good..."

Unfortunately we see and hear the above scenario all too often. The critical issue that is missed when it comes to projectors is that they require regular maintenance. Most importantly, a periodic cleaning is needed in order to:

1. Keep projectors running properly
2. Obtain the longest lamp life possible and
3. Maximize the number of years that you are able to keep your projectors in service

The cost of replacement lamps and lamp life must be factored into the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) for your projectors. Lamp life and the cost of replacements will have a significant impact on your projector TCO over the lifespan of your projectors. If you can maximize lamp life through an effective maintenance program, you can extend the life of not only lamps, but the projectors themselves.

Most replacement lamps range from \$299 to \$499 on average for typical classroom projectors. The dollars that you save on lamps over time can be allocated to other needs within your school.

Ways to Maximize Your Investment

If your school has an on-site technical staff that is qualified to perform the regular maintenance that is necessary for your projectors, it is definitely possible to create the proper maintenance program for your projectors internally. If you follow the self-support route, be sure to read the terms of the projector manufacturer's warranty to ensure that your maintenance activities are in compliance with the warranty. The last thing you want to do is to void the warranty on your projectors!

Ideally, your projector maintenance program will schedule complete projector cleanings three times per year. Classrooms that are carpeted tend to be dustier than rooms with tile. If classroom windows are kept open during nicer weather, this can add to the dirt and dust level as well. It's important to keep these environmental factors in mind when creating your maintenance schedule as the environment may differ from school to school and in some cases from classroom to classroom.

If you do not have the staff or the time necessary to complete regular projector maintenance, this service can be outsourced through a professional Audio-Visual systems installer. If you had your projectors professionally installed, there is a good chance that the same company has a service offering

that addresses projector maintenance. Once a plan is put together for your school, you can rest assured that cleanings will take place and that the work is completed in a timely manner. If you are in the Chicago Area, please visit <http://www.frostlineinc.com> for more information.