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**MAINTENANCE MATTERS** — Safeguarding your Amerex fire-suppression system

Amerex fire-suppression systems have been available as an option on MCI coaches since 2006. As installed, they consist of a self-contained, stand-alone system that will automatically deliver large amounts of dry-chemical fire extinguishing agent when the system's thermostat-type sensors exceed their specified thermal rating or the system is activated manually. This dry chemical is routed to multiple strategic locations by hoses and nozzles, primarily targeting the engine compartment area — none of it is routed into the passenger areas.

Service shop managers may nevertheless be concerned about what might happen if the system were to discharge in an indoor environment, where employees might be present. It appears there's mostly good news. Amerex makes the following comments about the dry chemical agent used:

**"CAUTION: The discharge of large amounts of dry chemical may create hazards to personnel such as reduced visibility and temporary breathing difficulty. The dry chemical is completely non-toxic, and considered only a nuisance dust by O.S.H.A. standards."**

Assuming the chemicals are kept where they belong, here are the other things you should understand about the Amerex system:

- Although when ordered as an option, the system is installed and serviced (including parts support) by MCI, it's electrical components are all made by Amerex. They consist of a control panel in the driver's area, a manually activated emergency switch in the driver's area, and a pressurized cylinder of dry chemical agent (fire extinguisher bottle) mounted in the rear of the bus. There are also several Amerex-made thermostatic temperature sensors along with all the connecting wiring.
- The system is not hooked into any of the MCI fire warning circuits, and shares no common components. They are two separate systems and do not react to or with each other.

Here's how to deal with the Amerex system:

- Service and operate the Amerex system at specified six-month intervals only in accordance with the recommended Amerex / MCI procedures, using only the correct authorized parts.
- MCI Service Bulletin No. 2930 details the operation and service of this system. It is a good idea to download several copies of this bulletin for shop use and also for driver safety orientations. For assistance in obtaining the bulletin or any other question you may have, call MCI tech support at 800-241-2947.
- Amerex installation, operation and maintenance manual No13980 Rev F applies to this and several other similar systems. Check <http://www.amerex-fire.com> or call Amerex at 205-655-3271 for further information.

The Amerex system is a powerful and valuable tool in protecting your equipment, your employees and your passengers. Keeping it in tip-top shape is in your interest, and those of the industry as a whole.

The FYI from MCI editorial staff values your feedback. Please e-mail any suggestions, comments, or ideas for future articles to [fyi@mcoach.com](mailto:fyi@mcoach.com).