



# Fan Coil Drip Tray or Condensate Pan Restoration

By Davoran Corak, RCM

Condensate pan, or so-called drip tray, is located inside the fan coil unit and underneath the coil. The main purpose of the tray is to collect the condensation from the fan coil unit during the cooling season. The drain is attached at the bottom of the pan and since the drain pipe is usually small in size (1/4" in diameter) it is susceptible to blockage.

Regular fan coil maintenance helps alleviate some of the problems and possible floods during the cooling season. Regular maintenance includes changing the filter, lubricating the motor, cleaning the fan coil and inspecting/cleaning the drip tray drain. However, in older condominium buildings at some point in time, the condensate pans get so rusted that the rust particles in the cooling season start separating from the tray and can easily block the drain. Blocked drains can cause

flooding with potentially significant damage to one or more units.

Regular fan coil maintenance will help in identifying the life span of the drip tray. In some buildings pan restorations are required after 10 years and in others after 20. Many different factors determine how quickly a condominium corporation has to deal with the rusted drip trays.

Several options are available for the drip tray restoration. The most affordable options are usually short term. If the condominium corporation decides to look in to the long-term solutions, options are very limited. Since the drip tray is attached to the frame of the fan coil unit it is difficult to replace. Replacement involves removing the entire fan coil, separating the drip tray from the coil and welding the new tray

on the frame of the coil. If this option is selected, it is recommended to restore the entire fan coil unit since it is taken out and parts are all accessible. This work would be costly. However, some condos experience the "rusted pan syndrome" prematurely while the rest of the fan coil equipment is still in good condition and not due for replacement.

One of the new products on the market is called "pancrete." It is manufactured in the United States and several contractors in the GTA are already using it. Pancrete stops corrosion and refurbishes corroded condensate pans. It has a water repellant surface and it levels the drip pan preventing water buildup. It also prevents further corrosion. This product increases structural integrity of drain pans, while sealing existing leaks permanently. It has a self-levelling capa-

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bility that eliminates uneven surfaces where water pooling can occur, and prevents growth of bacterial and fungal odours.

Pancrete is easy to apply and automatically self-levels the condensate pan, which eliminates the stagnant water from the drip tray. It is permanent. Downtime due to the installation is limited to a couple of days. Installation is a fraction of the cost of the complete fan coil unit restoration. It is applied to a 1/4 inch depth or more, depending on the application.

This product provides a smooth, easily cleanable surface in condensate pans and will extend the life of the condensate pan for many years. It is one of the more affordable options used for a permanent condensate pan restoration. ■



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