



## **Problems with Foamy Beer**

See below for some ideas on how to fix the problem. Before you get into trouble-shooting your system make sure of following things:

Is your system balanced?

Is the beer keg internal temperature below 4°C.?

Is your regulator gauge pressure set at the proper pressure for the keg temperature?

Remember that all these parameters have been worked out over several hundred years and each parameter is very important in serving a perfect draft. Many times it is more than one problem that needs to be fixed.

Read below for the problem you are experiencing:

### **I have Cloudy Beer!**

#### **Causes of hazy or cloudy draft beer**

Over chilling of the beer keg or beer lines. Beer should be stored at 2°C. to 4°C. Excessive low temperatures may cause hazy, cloudy beer, particularly when the beer is kept cold for a long time. Make sure the beer lines are thoroughly cleaned and then raise the temperature of the beer slightly.

Tap is not being opened quickly and fully. Be sure to open the tap completely and quickly. A damaged or dirty tap and will not open for full flow due to damages such as a worn tap coupling, washer, shaft seals, or contamination build-up. Disassemble the tap and check seals. Scour tap internal metal parts till they are smooth and clean.

Contaminated air source. Switch to a CO2 or other gas system. Always have your compressor inlet drawing fresh clean outside air. Be sure to have a hair felt filter on the inlet as well as an inline charcoal filter in the outlet line.

Defective Valves in the keg coupler. Bacteria may grow as a result of dirty or defective check valves in the coupler. Check and replace all vents and thoroughly clean the air lines. Replace if necessary.

Yeast growth or other obstruction in the faucet. Clean faucet with a good brush daily. Scour all internal parts at least once a week.

Moisture in the air system. A moisture trap must be installed in the Pre-Cooler and drained daily.



## **I have Flat Beer!**

Flat beer is when your draft beer has a foamy head which disappears quickly or the beer lacks the usual zesty flavour of brewery fresh beer.

### **Causes of flat draft beer and required correction**

Greasy glass. Beer glasses should not be washed with other items which have contained milk or other fatty substances. Be sure to remove all lipstick from the glass before washing. Wash glasses with hot water and not soap. Rinse glasses with fresh cold water. Do not dry beer glasses by wiping - air dry on a rack. It is best to serve draft beer in a wet glass.

Tap is not being opened quickly and fully Be sure to open the faucet completely and quickly. Check and find the correct distance to hold the glass from the tap when drawing the beer. When done properly the beer should have a tight creamy head with an average collar (height) of ¾" to 1". Beer without a head has the appearance of being flat.

Not enough gas pressure. If the beer pressure is correct the tap should fill a 285 ml glass in 4 seconds. (This is about 70 mls per second.) Check the pressure source for obstructions in the pressure line. Check for a sluggish or defective regulator. Always apply pressure to the keg before drawing beer.

Pressure is shut off. Turn on the pressure source and set to the proper psi.

Pressure is low. Check for compressor power or gas bottle pressure. When a barrel is tapped pressure must be applied continuously from start to finish. Check vent valves, check valves, line obstructions.

Pre-Cooler or Beer System is too cold. The temperature should never be warmer than 4°C. On long draw systems the temperature at the tap should always be at least two degrees colder than the pre-cooler or box.

Sluggish pressure regulator. Repair or replace the regulator.

Contaminated air source. Filter all air as it leaves the compressor. Oil fumes from compressor or kitchen grease fumes pumped into the beer will make the beer flat.

Moisture in the air system. Drain moisture trap daily.

Drafts. Rapid air movement which blows or sucks air across the bar where beer is being drawn may cause the beer's head to fall quickly. Redirect the air flow.

## **I have Foul Beer**

Off-tasting beer is often bitter and sometimes completely lacking in flavour and zest. It may have oily or foul "skunky" odor with a very unpleasant taste.

### **Causes of off-taste required correction**

Improper cleaning. Coils, taps, keg connectors, hoses, rods, fittings, seals and check valves should all be cleaned once a week with Keg and Line Cleaner or another approved cleaner

Beer line is not brewery approved or stainless steel. Replace with stainless steel or brewery approved vinyl beer line.

Dirty pressure lines. Hoses and vents should be inspected and if contaminated they should be replaced.

Improper pressure hose. Replace rubber hoses with Vinyl air line tubing.

Unfiltered air. Air must always be filtered. Install a charcoal filter in the air outlet and a hair felt inlet filter to the compressor.

Contaminated air. Air must be filtered and moisture traps installed and drained daily.

### **I have Sour Beer**

Beer has a yeasty or moldy taste.

#### **Causes and required corrections**

Improper cleaning. Coils, taps, keg connectors, hoses, rods, fittings, seals and check valves should all be cleaned once a week with BLC or an other approved cleaner.

Improper transportation or storage. Change beer storage to refrigerated storage and transportation.

Dirty pressure lines. Hoses and vents should be inspected and if contaminated they should be replaced.

Improper pressure hose. Replace rubber hoses with Vinyl air line tubing.

Unfiltered Air. Air must always be filtered. Install a charcoal filter in the air outlet and a hair felt inlet filter to the compressor.

Contaminated air. Air must be filtered and moisture traps installed and drained daily.

### **I have Wild (foaming) Beer!**

Wild beer is a beer that is all or mostly foam when it is drawn. Before all else, remember your beer system had to be set up properly for pressure and line balance. This trouble shooting page is for systems that were set up and working properly and have gone astray.

#### **Causes of wild beer, Required Correction**

Did you let the keg blow off (empty the lines). Beer drains from the lines during draws. The tap collar nut needs tightening to hold tap solidly closed. Tighten it so beer will not drain from the tap and lines back into the keg.

Did you let the keg settle for 24 hours after bouncing it around in the back of your pick-up? Grab a 6 pack and let it chill.

Improper holding of the glass. Glass must be held at a proper distance from the faucet - too close and there will be no head - too far and it will be all foam.

Poor pouring habits. Taps should be opened fully and quickly. A tap that is not opening quickly and fully will cause beer to foam.

Yeast build up in tap. Clean tap daily with a good tap brush. Scour all internal parts at least once a week and clean with Keg and Line Cleaner. Keep tap cold to prevent yeast growth.

Kinks, dents, twists in the beer line. Correct lay of the beer line as necessary.

Sag or trap in the beer line. Since line lengths must be maintained, route the line so as it is always leading up from the keg connector to the tap. Spirals are a good way of using up extra line inside the beer system.

Beer is too warm. The temperature at the tap must be as cold as the keg. Beer line must be kept refrigerated. Insulation is not refrigeration. Keep lines away from hot spots like heater pipes, hot water pipes and steam pipes.

No cold storage space for beer. Keep all kegs of beer refrigerated at all times. Never allow the keg to get above 4°C.

Too much pressure. Pressure should be maintained such that the beer will fill a 285 ml glass in 4 seconds. Check for proper regulator function.

Excess CO<sub>2</sub>. Adjust the CO<sub>2</sub> pressure as low as possible to maintain the proper beer flow above. No more than 18 psi should be applied to the keg.

Not enough pressure. Check for defective air vents and restrictions caused by dents, kinks and contamination in the pressure line and valves. Always turn on the pressure before drawing the beer.

Old beer. Rotate stock and store beer below 4°C always to prevent secondary fermentation.