

WHY Duct Cleaning is a DIRTY Business!

Whether or not you select **PROTEK** for any projects, we sincerely want you to get the results you want at the best price. That's why our clients have encouraged us to create this guide to help clarify the four key factors that determine if results will match expectations and if the price estimated is reasonable. The key factors are: **Scope, Methodology, Labor/Effort, and Verification.**

Since labor rates for skilled workers tend to be comparable, larger-than-expected differences between vendor estimates likely means that there is a disconnect between what you want and what *others think you will accept*. The key is to identify which factor(s) matter most to you, which created the problem, and what can you live with.

- 1) **Scope/Assumptions:** Carefully review each vendor's Scope and Assumptions to eliminate any that do NOT have sufficient details to show they understood exactly what you want – they are unlikely to meet or exceed your expectations.
- 2) **Methodology:** To properly compare, you must first assess the level of quality you expect. Then realize that cleanliness level is primarily determined by the methodology employed. According to the National Air Duct Cleaners Association (NADCA), the most effective way to clean ductwork is by **brushing** and physically agitating the **entire interior subsurface**. If vendors use another method, you must decide if that is acceptable or eliminate them.
- 3) **Labor/Effort:** Compare the number of man-days estimated. **ASK EACH** vendor:
 - a. How many workers will be supplied every day? **For safety** reasons, every vendor should provide a **minimum of 2** workers every day.
 - b. How many Man-days to complete? (e.g. **PROTEK** estimates a total of 35 Man-Days.)
- 4) **Verification:** Unfortunately, ducts and vents are mostly out of sight. Therefore, it's very difficult to know if they will be (or were) properly cleaned to the level you desire (we've heard horror stories about vendors cutting corners, and even taken pictures proving clients paid for ducts were NOT cleaned - see below). And since you can't verify up front, you must assess if a vendor can truly deliver the results you expect at the rate you are willing to pay.
 - a. One way to verify is to require vendors to provide **Before and After pictures**.
 - b. Better, calculate and compare the average hourly rates using this simple formula:

$$\frac{\text{(Total Estimated \$ - \$ for Materials)}}{\text{(Project Days x 8 Hours per Day) x (\# of Workers)}}$$

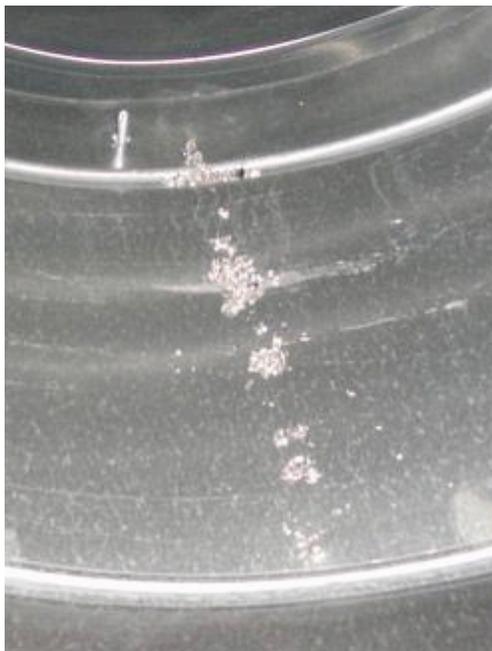
- c. Then assess if the hourly rates are reasonable.
- d. Next, compare the amount of labor each vendor estimated.
- e. Finally, determine whether or not you believe the quality you want aligns with the time and cost estimated.

As you can see, it is always not apples to apples. Make sure you are getting the correct/scoped deliverables every time. Otherwise, you might discover that an unscrupulous vendor took advantage of you, as shown below.

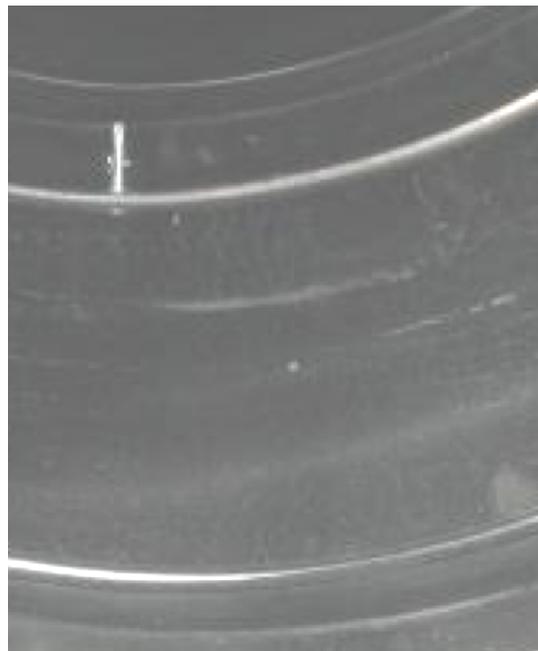
Under the tape is an access point (opening) that was cut into the duct by the prior vendor.



After peeling off the tape, **PROTEK** found **Metal Shavings**, inside several such openings.



Before



After cleaned by PROTEK

Unfortunately, these pictures **PROVE** that the **PRIOR VENDOR DID NOT CLEAN** the duct! All they did was cut an opening and close it up to make it look like they did the job correctly.

CAVEAT EMPTOR

The above picture also shows improper sealing of the duct opening. NADCA Code 4.2.8.2 states: “Service panels used for closing service openings shall be mechanically fastened (screwed or riveted) at minimum every 4” on center. The panel shall overlap the ductwork surfaces by a minimum of 1” on all sides.” NADCA Code 4.2.8.3 goes on to recommend using duct sealant, as well.

The picture above shows NO fasteners. If an educated client saw this mistake, they would immediately check to see other corners were cut by this vendor. As likely as not, they would have opened up the duct, found the metal shards, and fired the vendor on the spot.

Compare the following patches created by **PROTEK**.



6” x 6” opening sealed with screws and *clear* duct putty.



18” x 14” opening sealed with screws and *standard* duct putty.