

# Cleaning and Maintaining ISDUP Markers



The care of all markers within your company boundaries are under the supervision of the company board. The company president may identify a marker chairman to be responsible for the maintenance of markers. The company can be assigned a camp to oversee a marker. The company should know the condition of the markers and the area around the marker should be free of weeds, trash, or other unsightly problems. If the plaques are cleaned on at least an annual basis they will not be difficult to maintain. Tips for cleaning the markers are below.

## Cleaning Navalloy Plaques/Markers

The surface of Navalloy plaques can be wiped clean with soap and water using a soft cloth. Should vandals spray the plaque with paint, it can be removed with paint remover without marring the finish. Vinegar, Ajax, paint thinner, or liquid dry cleaner can be used, if necessary. Do not use steel wool or steel brushes. Do not spray any clear varnish or other protective coat on the plaque. It is not necessary and may damage the plaque. Paste wax may be applied for added luster and protection, but this is not necessary.

## Cleaning Bronze Plaques/Markers

Remember these plaques are historical themselves. They are no longer made. Below are some ideas to help you clean bronze markers.

1. Clean the entire plaque with a gentle cleaner and water. Bronze is a soft metal, so use a soft brush. A toothbrush works fine. Do not use any steel brush or steel wool or you will scratch the plaque. In many instances water and elbow grease do a thorough job of cleaning. For stubborn water stains and dirt, a mixture of water and gentle soapy water will work.
2. For tougher stains, use a mixture of water and non-ionic soap to remove them. Do not use abrasives because they will scratch the plaque. Carefully rinse the plaque to remove all soap residue.
3. If the plaque needs a deep cleaning, there are several methods that work well using household products. Remember that many of the markers are not by a water source, you may need to take water with you. In addition to the water remember to take gloves, a spray bottle, toothbrush, and soft cloths. You can choose one of the following methods.
  - Add 1 tbsp. of salt to a cup of white vinegar. Add enough flour to make a paste. Apply the paste with a clean, soft cloth to the plaque. Make sure it is completely covered. Allow the mixture to sit on the plaque for at least 15 minutes. Some plaques require that the paste be on the plaque for 1-2 hours.
  - Fill a bowl full of ketchup. Using a sponge apply ketchup to the surface of the bronze plaque. Let it stay covered in ketchup for about 15 minutes. Rinse with water and then dry with a soft, clean cloth.
  - Make a paste mixture by combining baking soda with vinegar. Rub the paste on the plaque and let it sit for 15 minutes.

After using one of these methods, rinse the plaque with water and polish with a soft, clean cloth. Make sure the paste is removed.

4. Lighten only the tops of the letters. Do NOT try to lighten the background. Do NOT spray anything onto the plaque as a protective coat.
5. The surface can be brightened by using a very light abrasive sandpaper, #400. Do not use a sanding block.
6. Professionals advise that brass cleaners by themselves are sometimes helpful but encourage adding one cup vinegar and 1/2 teaspoon of salt to the brass cleaner. Brass cleaners should only be used after the household methods do not work.