cleaning tool each time a predetermined number of substrates are scrubbed; and

determining a replacement time of the cleaning tool based on a difference in the surface data obtained.

[Claim 12] The substrate cleaning method according to claim 11, wherein determining the replacement time of the cleaning tool comprises:

comparing the difference in the surface data with a predetermined threshold value; and

determining that the cleaning tool has reached the replacement time when the difference has reached the predetermined threshold value.

[Claim 13] The substrate cleaning method according to claim 11 or 12, wherein the surface data is obtained by an imaging device which is moved by a camera-moving mechanism.

[Claim 14] The substrate cleaning method according to any one of claims 11 to 13, wherein the surface data is obtained at a retreat position where the cleaning tool is away from a surface of the substrate.

[Claim 15] The substrate cleaning method according to any one of claims 11 to 14, further comprising:

performing a break-in check operation after the cleaning tool is replaced with a new cleaning tool,

wherein the break-in check operation includes:

obtaining surface data of the new cleaning tool at at least two measurement points of the new cleaning tool, each time a predetermined number of dummy substrates are scrubbed with the new cleaning tool; and

determining completion of break-in of the new cleaning tool based on a difference in the surface data obtained.

[Claim 16] The substrate cleaning method according to any one of claims 11 to 15, wherein