



# A little reminder never hurts

*Over the past couple of years we have been discussing the “hot topics”: Waterborne Conversion and Energy Efficiencies. Both of these items (especially waterborne conversions) have dominated our industry over the past couple of years and deserved the attention they received. With that said, we are here to remind ourselves that over the long haul nothing is more important than good practice!*

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**W**e know that most of you have been back to your paint suppliers' training centers or have attended clinics at a local shop or school facility, so we should all be at the top of our game. Unfortunately, we are seeing that the attention to detail that was being brought back to proper application procedures are being lost. Not in all cases, and not as bad as it once was, however, let's keep in mind that the equipment is only as good as the person using it. We don't care what kind of booth you are spraying in, if you, the booth or the

equipment are dirty, you will get dirty paint jobs!

In today's competitive and somewhat controlled markets, time costs money and the average shop cannot take the time for re-dos and returns without it cutting deeply into the bottom line and future ability to be profitable and successful.

The following is a list of good practices to help control contamination (it is impossible to totally eliminate it). We can only do our best, and good practice plays a huge roll in bottom line

and ultimately, our success.

## Vehicle

Obliviously, dirty vehicles introduce contamination to our paint environment. You have likely spent 10's of thousands of dollars on your booth so why not take a few moments to:

- ▶ Ensure the booth is running before bringing the vehicle inside
- ▶ Do NOT leave vehicles ready for paint in the booth overnight
- ▶ Pressure wash the undercarriage as well as the body (outside the booth) before bringing the vehicle in



*The more attention we put on proper practice the better our finishes will be!*

### The five primary sources of contamination are:

1. Vehicle (not properly prepped, poorly masked etc.)
2. Paint (not properly mixed, exposed to dirty conditions etc.)
3. Compressed Air System (not properly filtered, dirty filters etc.)
4. Operator (not properly dressed, not setting up product properly in booth etc.)
5. Booth (filters not changed, balance not checked etc.)

- ▶ Use only proper, lint-free towels
- ▶ Use separate lint-free towels for separate jobs (i.e. solvent wipe vs. drying)
- ▶ Try not to touch vehicle with hands during prep/sand process
- ▶ Clean vehicle well with high pressure air, paying close attention to joints, seams and jambs (outside the booth)
- ▶ Buy good quality masking materials and ensure they are applied with care (avoid ripped fibrous edges and cheap mask papers)
- ▶ Perform final tack INSIDE booth

#### Paint

Obviously, the paint companies do NOT put contamination into their products! With that said, there can be a vessel of contamination and we must take care to minimize this source. The paint companies teach technique for a reason, and despite how long we may have been in the industry, will it kill us to try it their way?

- ▶ Storage/Mixing and Tinting should be done in a bright, clean area
- ▶ NEVER store polishes, compounds and waxes in or near your mix room
- ▶ Use a clean, dedicated table for mixing and clean it regularly (stainless steel is preferable)

- ▶ Do not leave paper products on mix table (fibrous)
- ▶ Keep solvent and hardener cans CLOSED
- ▶ Do not leave mixed or unmixed materials open and unattended
- ▶ Follow the manufacturer's recommendations (order, mix ratios etc.)
- ▶ Do not use additives unless recommended by the paint manufacturer
- ▶ Cover containers with original lids
- ▶ Use plastic stirrers
- ▶ Strain paint with high quality wire mesh strainers
- ▶ Do not make the mix room a meeting room (this is the painters' private domain. Fewer people = less chance of contamination)

#### Compressed Air System

This is the heart and soul of your paint application process! If the air that is going into the gun is contaminated, there is a very good chance that contamination will work its way through the tool and onto the surface you are finishing.

- ▶ Regularly check and change pre-filters on air lines
- ▶ Ensure zone desiccant material does not require change (breaks down to sand when it is left saturated for too long)
- ▶ Use an auto-drain on your compressed air source (air compressor)
- ▶ Regularly check and change compressor oil
- ▶ Drain water taps daily
- ▶ Use a properly sized air dryer for your compressor

#### Operator

The operator MUST be clean and must do his best to be clean prior to entering the booth. He must check himself as well as his equipment.

- ▶ Avoid wearing cotton or fibrous clothing
- ▶ Wear lint-free suit for spraying
- ▶ Hair should be covered
- ▶ Store lint-free suit in a clean area
- ▶ Eliminate traffic through the booth and mix room
- ▶ Ensure guns and hoses are kept clean and are properly hung up when not in use

#### Booth

The booth is where all the above come together so it is essential we do our very best to control the environment.

- ▶ Do not leave unnecessary items in the booth (tack rags, waste, cans etc.)
- ▶ Never sand in the booth
- ▶ Do not move cars without booth running
- ▶ Do not leave solvents, tack rags, etc. in booth on 'bake' cycle
- ▶ Check booth pressure regularly
- ▶ Check and change filters frequently
- ▶ Schedule periodic booth cleaning
- ▶ Purchase or set up a service schedule for paint booth
- ▶ Do not use cotton or fibrous mops to clean booth floor or walls

These are just some reminders of good practices that we are sure you are all aware of, however, you have had a lot to think about over the last couple years and little reminder never hurts!

Good Finishing! ■