

**RED ZONE**  
Newsletter

Issue 9, February 2005

Edgebanders are sophisticated pieces of equipment that require regular maintenance in order to perform at their peak. Moving parts must be cleaned and/or adjusted daily, often more frequently. Strictly following the manufacturer's preventative maintenance schedule will save hours (or days) of costly unscheduled shutdown.

Of critical importance is the maintenance of the "glue station". Improperly applied adhesive can result in machine problems further down the edgebander and lead to failures in the field.

Machines that are not used continuously, or have large glue pots, are prone to degradation, such as surface skinning and charring on the sides of the pot. The appearance of degraded hot melt varies considerably. In the early stages, it is often described as "rubbery" – it has not changed color but has gelled. Sometimes small pieces of gel break off giving the illusion that the fresh adhesive has "lumps" in it. As degradation continues the adhesive gets harder and harder and darker and darker until, in extreme cases, the hot melt turns into hard, black char. Bits of char which break off are often mistaken for dirt or pebbles and will shut down a machine as quickly as the real thing. Char can quickly be distinguished from pebbles as it can usually be crushed between the fingernails.

**What can you do to keep your edgebander running trouble-free? Here are some suggestions:**

- Keep the glue pot full to minimize charring on the sides.

- Close the lid to keep out airborne contaminants.
- Remove skins or charred material before adding fresh hot melt.
- Use the "set back" feature. If there isn't one, turn the temperature down to 150°C (300 F) when not in use.

However, even diligent adherence to the above practices cannot prevent the inevitable build up of degraded adhesive in the adhesive application system. This is why we developed **HELMITHERM 499 Hot Melt Cleaner**. Use it on a regular basis as part of your preventative maintenance program. How often depends on the maintenance schedule specified by the machine manufacturer, however, we find that a good cleaning at least every 60 days helps to keep things running smoothly.

**HELMITHERM 499** is an excellent and easy to use hot melt cleaner available in both pellets and cartridges. It is a non-flammable, non-hazardous solid at room temperature. Unlike the other hot melt cleaners on the market, it does not require the machine to be at full running temperature to be effective. It is completely compatible with hot melt adhesives to ensure smooth restarts after cleaning. Spilled or dripped cleaner peels easily once cooled and the disposal of the used material is in with the regular solid waste. Every edgebander should be using **HELMITHERM 499** hot melt cleaner.

For more information contact:

- Mike Curran, Technical Support @ 416-239-3105 ext. 228 or m.curran@helmitinadhesives.com
- Will Riske, Senior Applications Specialist @ 416-239-3105 ext 247 or w.riske@helmitinadhesives.com
- Carla Roach, Sales & Marketing Coordinator @ 416-239-3105 ext. 250 or c.roach@helmitinadhesives.com