

ACTEGA Kelstar Technical Bulletin

Blanket and Roller Maintenance

Maintenance Pays for Itself

Rollers and blankets are the real key to good printing. They are also expensive and deserve the best care. Rubber in top condition resembles a new pencil eraser, but with use, the surface hardens and glazes over. This glazed surface cannot transfer ink or water properly.

The rubber surfaces are ground with a slight texture to move ink and water through the press. There is a dull velvety look and feel caused by the texture and soft surface. Rubber is compounded of hard polymer molecules and liquid plasticizers or softening agents to give the desired durometer.

- **Causes of Glazing** – Gradually the surface texture fills in and forms a shiny hard outer layer. Several sources combine to cause this.

- **Non-Soluble Residue** – Clay paper filler, pigment particles, calcium salts and dust do not wash out with press wash or water and build up.

- **Water Soluble Films** – Gum and paper sizing are not soluble in solvents and require a water rinse.

- **Solvent Soluble Vehicle** – Ink resins can embed into the pores and are best removed with water miscible wash or a stronger deglazer.

Restoring Rollers to Like New

Wash the press using your daily press wash. Now take a close look at the rollers – Are they shiny, any pigment tint or white salt deposits near the ends?

- Rewash with your press wash mixed 70/30 with water. This removes the outer layer of all soluble glaze.

- Apply Erase Roller Cleaner and Paste and allow to work into the rubber for 5 minutes or more. Wash the rollers a third time with the press wash and water mixture to remove the deep soluble glaze.

Whenever calcium glaze is a problem (stripping or white deposits) apply Deglaze Gel Calcium Salt Remover. This is a strong salt dissolver and will quickly liquefy calcium carbonate or phosphate salt deposits. Rinse out of the rollers with warm water and check to see that the deposits are completely gone.

- Carefully check the roller stripes to be sure that the settings are correct and not tighter than the press manufacturer suggests. Excess pressure is one of the leading causes of short roller life.

- Keep your wash-up blades like new. This will speed wash up and reduce the quantity of press wash used, giving a fast pay back for your new blades.

Weekly Washing Routine

Both print quality and production will improve by selecting the right maintenance supplies and following a good cleaning regimen.

- **Daily Wash** – Always choose the mildest wash which will do the job. The advantages are lower odor, reduced skin irritation, longer roller life and less opening of the pores which helps prevent pigment staining.

- **Use of Strong Deglazers / Rejuvenators** – One or two shift operations can benefit from using a stronger product for the last wash of the day. For three shift operations, this would be at the end of the week. Rejuvenators swell the rubber and help to deep clean but the rollers need to rest and return to their original size.

- **Roller Paste and Calcium Remover** – These can be used daily or whenever needed. Erase can be left on the rollers overnight or over the weekend. Use Deglaze regularly or any time you suspect deposits are building.

- **Contact ACTEGA Kelstar** at 856 829 6300 or info.actega.kelstar@altana.com for additional information or technical assistance.