Tips and Techniques

SUGGESTED USES FOR ASH-FREE ANALYTICAL FILTER PULP

Ash-free analytical grade cotton pulp can be a very useful material to wick or poultice water soluble stains or adhesive from paper artifacts. It is very easy to handle with tweezers or with your fingers, leaving little or no residual material behind. The pulp is fluffy and fibrous yet compact, enabling good contact with the object, optimum wicking action and easy removal of the pulp clump.

Two uses of the pulp were shown during the tip session at the AIC-BPG Nashville meeting. In the first example slightly damp pulp was applied to water soluble adhesive on the back of a trade card. Traditional use of a damp swab in this instance would have damaged the thick, water sensitive, highly calendered clay coated paper. The pulp was wetted with water and then blotted to the desired wetness and then put in place until it was "time" to remove it. This was judged by letting the pulp stay on as long as possible but not allowing it to go to complete dryness- so that the pulp fibers would not stick in the adhesive. The steps were repeated several times being careful not to overwork an area. The initial degree of dampness employed is very important. Over-wet pulp (which is very east to achieve) can cause tide lines. Practicing on expendable material is strongly recommended.

In the second example, a severely stained paper label on a glass bottle was treated. A condition of treatment imposed by the client was that the label had to stay attached to the bottle at all times. In this instance dry pulp was applied entirely over the lightly misted label. This time, the pulp was allowed to go to dryness. Once the label was dry it was examined with magnification using a binocular stereo-microscope. Any residual pulp fibers were lightly brushed off with a soft sable brush and a bulb blower.

Experimentation with ash-free analytical filter pulp and solvents has been conducted on pressure sensitive adhesive / stains (especially on mounts)with good results. Standard application techniques need to be altered slightly. Again, the high fluid retention capacity of the filter pulp can increase the risk of tide line formation.

Ash-free analytical filter pulp, product #07250, 123 grams can be procured through Schleicher and Schuell, 10 Optical Ave., P.O. Box 2021, Keene, New Hampshire 03431. Their telephone number is

(800) 245-4024. The pulp is also available from Fisher Scientific, catalog #09-947.

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"FIMAR" CHEESE GRATER

The curatorial and preservation staff of the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site discovered in 1993 a method for grating Mars Staedtler Erasers. Through the use of a "Fimar" Italian cheese grater, an eraser block can be grated to a medium coarse grind in less than one minute. The grating drum is stainless steel, as is the collecting bowl. Lighter pressure can produce a finer grind. Additionally, the use of a coffee mill such as Krups or Braun has been suggested to produce a more powdery textured eraser.

Care should be taken to avoid grating the blue ink stamped on one side on the eraser block. Grating down to within 1/8" of this stamping is recommended.

The grater can be purchased from Globe Food Service Equipment Corporation, 695 Belmont Street, Belmont, MA 02178. Their telephone number is 617-923-1274. Their fax number is 617-489-5550.

"MAX" STAPLE REMOVER

A simple, easy to use staple remover called MAX Remover RZ-F, shaped somewhat like a Reach toothbrush can facilitate the removal of staples from soft, deteriorated papers.

Each prong of the staple is lifted carefully. Next, the point of the MAX Remover RZ-F is inserted into the flat of the staple and slid forward. The staple is "collected" on the shank of the MAX Remover and then staples can be safely disengaged. The staple remover can be purchased through Phase One Office Products, Inc., 89 Fulkerson Street, Cambridge, MA 02141. Their phone number is 1-800-333-3797.

"SQUEEZ-ETTS" LIQUID DISPENSERS

These small 2 1/2" long polyethylene capillary tubes are useful for placing a small amount of liquid in an area where a long syringe may be awkward to use. The tip of the tube is smaller than the body, and controlling the application of the liquid is simply done through squeezing. These tubes can be purchased from Ellman International, Inc., 1135 Railroad Avenue, Hewlett, New York, 11557. Their phone is 1-800-835-5355.

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