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Communications

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Quick Tips: Selecting the Proper Cleanroom Wiper

- For most cleanroom environments, synthetic fibers and blends are the materials of choice.
- Wipers should work without leaving residuals, including solid particles (lint) and chemical elemental components (extractables).
- Lint can be quantified via biaxial shake lint testing or by measuring the particles released through flexing or twisting the material.
- In general, a wiper made of 100 percent synthetic material will provide lower particulates than cellulose-based wipers, because the synthetic single filament fibers are less likely to shed.
- Extractables can be leached out of wipers by solvents or other fluids being used on the wiper. Those extractables are subsequently deposited on the surface being cleaned or prepped.
- Extractables data are typically provided for both water and a solvent. Wipers made of synthetic fibers that are thermally bonded or woven using processes that avoid glues, surfactants, binders or other additives typically have low extractables.
- Evaluate wipers according to IES-RP-CC004 “Evaluating Wiping Materials Used in Cleanrooms and other Controlled Environments.”
- Absorbent characteristics of cleanroom wipers can be evaluated via:
 - o Dynamic Wiping Efficiency: Provides a good indicator of the absorbent capacity of the wiper, but does not accurately represent a wiper’s ability to retain fluid and leave the surface free of residue.
 - o Absorbent Capacity and Rate: As measured by IEST-RP-CC004.3, determines how much liquid the wiper can hold, but not in a real-world wiping application. This method also allows one to determine how quickly the wiper absorbs liquid, but does not address the wiper’s ability to remove fluid residue from the wiped surface.
 - o Clean Wiping Efficiency Test Method: More closely represents the wiper’s actual use in a cleanroom, displaying greater consistency in measuring wiper performance and minimizing tester error.
- Choosing the right wiper is a function of understanding:
 - o The contaminant you’re cleaning from the surface.
 - o The nature of any chemicals that contact the wiper.
 - o The nature of the surface being wiped.

- o Duration of the wiping task.
- o Risk involved (if work in progress is damaged).
- o The objective of the wiping task.
- o The Cleanroom Class.
- Questions to ask when selecting a Cleanroom Wiper:
 - o Can the wiper be sterilized?
 - o Will the wiper be used in contact with pharmaceutical, biotechnology or medical products?
 - o Is absorbency the most important attribute, or is fluid release more critical?
 - o How durable is the wiper?
 - o What is the wiper's finish edge?
 - o What are the wiper's packaging options?
 - o Will the wiper's packaging protect them from contamination in transit?
 - o Will the wiper's packaging protect against static build-up during dispensing?
 - o Is the wiper being used with solvents?
 - o Do you need to disinfect and/or sanitize surfaces?

For more information on selecting the right cleanroom wiper, visit www.kcprofessional.com.

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