

# WARCO® BILTRITE® Times

## Why are imported sheet products so inexpensive?

Most imported sheet products are heavily loaded with fillers and regrind ingredients, which are low cost ingredients that significantly degrade the material's performance characteristics.

## Do low priced imports meet any specifications?

It is difficult for any product to meet a specification that contains a high percentage of regrind and filler materials, which is the case with most low priced imported sheet materials.

## Why are the low priced import sheets heavier than their domestic sheet counterparts?

The specific gravity of fillers and regrind is much higher than the polymer content the products are supposed to contain. The more fillers you use, the heavier the product becomes, resulting in a higher actual price paid per lineal foot when buying by the pound, as most imported product is sold by the pound.

**HOW CHEAP GETS EXPENSIVE**  
*How "Made in the USA" translates into Dollars and Cents*

## How can a potential buyer of import sheet rubber be assured of consistent product quality from one purchase to the next?

They CANNOT! Unless there is a way of consistently measuring product quality, there is no way to guarantee product uniformity. This is the function of the specification.

## How can I be assured that imported product will offer acceptable service in applications?

Without a product specification, which at a minimum tests rubber for heat aging, compression set recovery and possibly oil resistance, there is no way to be sure that a product will perform satisfactorily in an application. It might be acceptable one time and not the other.

## Do any import sheet suppliers offer products that meet specifications?

Yes, BUT they generally cost much more than their low priced import counterparts and offer little or no price incentive over a similar grade of domestic sheet. When you factor in the extensive lead times to get import sheet products to the USA, it would be hard to find any benefit.

## Why do most import sheet products have such a strong odor?

The use of high levels of regrind rubber is generally the reason for the strong odor. High levels of regrind material significantly degrade the physical properties and performance of the material.

## Do you know what you're really getting? Are you really saving?



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## SATRA Accredited Laboratory at Biltrite Ripley Operations

By: Phil Shackelford, Lab Manager for Biltrite Ripley Operations, LLC

### What is SATRA?

SATRA Technology Center is the world's largest international membership-based research and technology organization for consumer product industries. Established in 1919 as the British Boot, Shoe & Allied Trades Research Association (BBSATRA) with grants from the UK government, its name was shortened to the Shoe & Allied Trades Research Association (SATRA) in the 1960s. Over the last few years it has become the SATRA Technology Center to reflect the growing diversity of its membership base. SATRA is now a very successful, private, independent, non-profit making organization.

### SATRA Laboratory Accreditation

SATRA's laboratory accreditation service was launched several years ago and its rapid take-up by rubbers & plastics suppliers is testament to the great value placed on quality control in today's industry. This badge of SATRA approval for a company's quality control testing systems has also proved a major selling point in helping manufacturers communicate their commitment to quality to their customers.

More than one hundred laboratories worldwide are currently accredited by SATRA. To achieve this distinction, the quality system, the equipment, the environment, and the staff have to prove to be of a very high standard. Regular audits ensure an on-going commitment to quality - and - continuity of accredited status is by no means automatic. Laboratories are often asked to improve processes or training before re-accreditation is granted.

What SATRA accreditation involves:

- Installation of the laboratory quality-control systems.
- Recommendation of the test machinery required and where it can be obtained.
- Calibration of the equipment and identification of any repairs or replacements needed.
- Training of laboratory personnel and assessments of their ability to carry out relevant tests.

The Reliability Test Lab at Biltrite Ripley Operations, LLC facility of WARCO BILTRITE first achieved SATRA accreditation in May 2000 – and – through a continued commitment to quality has consistently performed well through the regular audits and has maintained the accreditation without interruption.

### Why is SATRA certification important? How is it beneficial?

In today's quality-conscious world it is becoming increasingly difficult for any supply company to compete without demonstrating a commitment to providing a consistent, quality product. SATRA helps its members achieve one of the most important elements in any quality assurance program: reliable testing at the point of manufacture.

Testing plays a vital role in all industries. It is used to verify the quality of incoming materials, to control and validate critical processes during manufacture and to predict the performance of the finished product. Although there are many independent laboratories offering testing services, the cost-effectiveness and quick response of in-factory test facilities gives a clear indication to customers that we place a high priority on quality.

However, the fact that a manufacturing company has an on-site laboratory is not enough in itself. There must also be some kind of official recognition of the quality of the testing processes, the skills of the technicians, and therefore the reliability of the results. This can be provided only by accreditation of the laboratory by a recognized industry body.

Many governments have national accreditation schemes but these must necessarily be non-specific to the type of manufacturing industry. SATRA has detailed knowledge and long experience of testing leather, rubbers & plastics, footwear and other goods –



**Biltrite Ripley Laboratory**  
Standing left to right - Scott Mercer (Technician), Dee McCoy (Chemist), Gene Coltharp (Technician), and Phil Shackelford (Lab Manager/Chemist) Seated - Violet Bails (Technician)

– and – an unrivaled worldwide reputation for high standards and independence. By going the extra mile to maintain this challenging accreditation, our customers can be confident that their products are of impeccable quality.

# Safety Incentive Program

## Working to Raise Safety Performance

By: Art Ruben, Vice President Human Resources

We believe in maintaining a hands-on, proactive safety program here at WARCO. Our efforts finally paid off in 2006. We ended 2006 with 63 total work related claims, **a reduction of over 43%** from the 111 total work related claims in 2005. No one person is responsible for these results, but if I were to place responsibility, I would first of all thank Renan Mendez, Francisco Martinez and their management staff, along with the Safety Officer, David Siranjeevi for their excellent safety-related efforts.

We have in addition introduced a Department Safety Incentive Program. Each quarter, the WARCO Safety Committee will award one department the title of "Safe

Department of the Quarter". Eligibility is based on many factors including:

- Each Department's Reportable Accident Record
- Proactive methods initiated by the department to:
  - Promote safety awareness
  - Improve department and company safety performance

The WARCO Safety Committee named the **Injection Molding Department** as the "Safe Department of the Quarter" for the 4th quarter of 2006.

My personal thanks to the entire factory and specifically to our Injection Molding Department for a job very well done!

## Welcoming New Members to WARCO Biltrite



**Dale Schneider, Cost Analyst** – Joined the team in January 2007, he has extensive and varied experience in budgeting, cost containment and productivity improvement. Dale received his MBA from California State University, Dominguez Hills, California. His hobbies include hiking, swimming and having campfires at the beach during the summer and playing baseball with his family.



**Claudia Priego, ISO Coordinator** – Joined the team in January 2007. Claudia's responsibilities include coordinating the preparation, review, publication and distribution of ISO 9001:2000 quality documents, manuals and associated records, processing corrective/actions and maintaining control of internal audit schedules. Her hobbies include playing soccer and going to the movies.



**Manuel Valenzuela, Estimator** – Joined the team in January 2007, he has eight years of experience in the rubber industry and previously worked as a Products Sales Manager for DeVolls Rubber. Manuel will be working closely with our customers to provide estimating for extruded, molded and sheet rubber products. His hobbies include coaching and playing softball.



**Beth Panell, Customer Service Representative** – Joined the team in January 2007 and will be working with the team at Biltrite Ripley Operations. Beth will be assisting customers with order processing and order follow-up. She will celebrate her 18th wedding anniversary this June, has three children – Robert, Heather and Lyndsey.



**Riley Jeter, Customer Service Representative** – Joined the team in January 2007 and will be working with the team at Biltrite Ripley Operations. Riley will be working closely with our customers to provide order processing and estimating. His hobbies include playing golf, hunting and fishing.



**Beth Obligacion, Credit and Collections Clerk** – Joined the team in February 2007. She has 11 years of experience in the manufacturing/distribution industry. Beth received her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a minor in English from Philippine Christian University. Her hobbies include playing guitar and singing, and she enjoys listening to soft jazz.

*Welcome to all the new members and we wish you every success for the future with WARCO Biltrite.*

## *Shelf Life of Rubber Products*

*By: Louie Gonzalez, Manager, Quality Control*

The recommended shelf life generally associated with products fabricated from various rubbers is listed below and is based on information provided in MIL-HDBK-695D Military Standardization Handbook Rubber Products: Recommended Shelf Life. These numbers represent average shelf life under normal dry/cool storage conditions and should be used for guidance purposes only. Shelf life varies depending on product specifications and compound design. For recommended shelf life of specific WARCO compounds, please contact our Technical Department at 714-532-3355.

Common or Trade Name	Recommended Shelf Life
Silicone	20 Years
Fluorel, Viton	20 Years
Neoprene	5-10 Years
EPDM	5-10 Years
Butyl	5-10 Years
Hypalon	5-10 Years
NBR	3-10 Years
SBR	3-5 Years
Natural, Pure Gum	3-5 Years

### WARCO<sup>®</sup> BILTRITE<sup>®</sup> Times

WARCO Biltrite Times is published by the Marketing Department of West American Rubber Co., LLC. The purpose of this publication is to inform our customers of WARCO Biltrite on current affairs of our company, and to heighten awareness of new products available to our customers.

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