

Protective skin creams Do they affect adhesion to surfaces we touch?

We recently completed adhesion testing for a boatbuilder who was concerned about surfaces being contaminated by workers who use protective skin creams. The builder wanted to be sure that residue from the protective creams did not contaminate objects touched by workers throughout the day. We tested five products: Derma Shield™, Gloves in a Bottle™, Unique Skin™, SBS 46 Protective Cream™ and SBS 40 Medicated Skin Cream™.

Using our PATTI (pneumatic adhesion tensile test instrument), we compared adhesion results for control surfaces (just sanded) against surfaces that were smudged by fingers that had been treated with the different protective skin creams. We chose "G-10, an epoxy/fiberglass laminate that is heat-cured under pressure, as the substrate because of its well-known high strength properties. It was sanded thoroughly with 80-grit on a DA sander, and then hand sanded with fresh 80-grit paper just prior to bonding. Five test studs for the control and each protective skin cream were bonded with WEST SYSTEM® 105 Resin and 205 Hardener to the G-10 laminate. The creams were allowed to dry five minutes on our hands before the surfaces were smudged. Test studs were glued in place minutes later.

Here are the results: As the adhesion test indicates, these protective creams have a minimal effect on WEST SYSTEM adhesion to a sanded fiberglass laminate. Concern over their effect on adhesion should not influence your decision on whether to use protective creams.

Surface condition	PATTI results avg.	% Effective compared to control
G-10 control (sanded)	1316 PSI	---
Derma Shield smudge	1283 PSI	97.5%
Gloves in a Bottle smudge	1202 PSI	91.3%
Unique Skin smudge	1349 PSI	102.5%
SBS 46 smudge	1302 PSI	98.9%
SBS 49 smudge	1323 PSI	100.5%

Protective skin creams are definitely worth using, but they are not a substitute for protective gloves and clothing. We recommend using protective creams as a backup to gloves when you work around resins and hardeners or dust from sanded epoxy. For more safety information, go to the Safety page on our website, or send for 000-574 *Epoxy Safety* by calling 989-684-7286.

—Tom Pawlak ■