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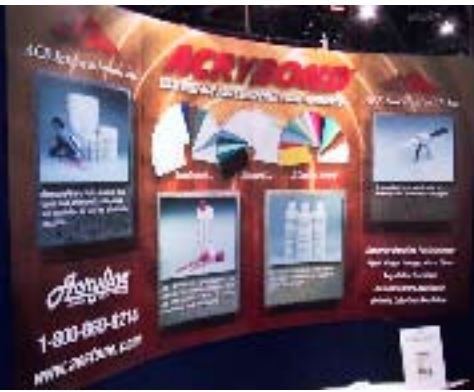
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CASTING NEWS NETWORK

Spring 2004

Would you like to receive this newsletter electronically? Or, would you rather not be on our mailing list? Please send your request to sales@acstone.com.

Trade Show Spot



Polycon 2004
 ACS attended two shows back to back during the late winter season. The first was POLYCON 2004 in New Orleans, Louisiana and the second at ISSFA in Las Vegas.

Upcoming Shows
 Currently, no shows are scheduled during the summer. However, ACS will be present at the following shows this fall:

Composites 2004	IBEX
October 6-8	October 25-27
Booth Number 1246	None assigned yet.

For more show information, please send inquiry to angela@acstone.com.

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 Angela joins ACS from her previous position as Marketing Communications Manager with RVSI, a semiconductor equipment manufacturer.

ACS welcomes Bettye Smith within the accounting department as the Purchasing Agent for ACS.



Bettye has over thirteen years of experience in purchasing for manufacturing companies. She joins ACS, and the Tucson area, from her previous position as a buyer for Clairon Metals in Georgia.

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New Product Release

Arizona Cultured Stone International, Inc. (ACS) announces the release of Acryline®, an acrylic inlay kit. Acryline is a 100% acrylic product designed to ensure a non-porous finish with minimal shrinkage.



“Acryline effectively meets the needs of individuals installing inlays into acrylic, polyester and wood surfaces. It’s easy to use and reduces the time normally spent trying to mix small batches of resin”, says Greg Novak, President of ACS.

The Acryline kit includes resin, filler, a mixing cup, mixing stick and complete instructions. Each kit contains a separate color and covers thirty lineal feet of ¼” surface inlay. Once mixed, this fast curing liquid can then be poured into a channel or other cavity to create your own custom inlay.

In addition to ease-of-use, the Acryline formula is one of the fastest inlay materials on the market—ready to sand in under sixty minutes. The inlay can then be thermoformed after installation. Ideal applications for Acryline are custom counter tops, signs, or logo inserts.



Sold separately, a wide range of colors are available in both solid colors and granite tones. ACS can accommodate custom color requests as well. In addition, the Acryline colors are matched to many of the popular name brands available. The Acryline formula ensures minimal shrinkage in a non-porous finish from matte to high-gloss.



Q&A

Q: Can I use my standard marble clear gel coat when spraying Poly Stone® directly into the mold?

A: Sometimes. Not all gel coats are created equal. However, some gel coats can handle being laid down in a mass that exceeds 25 mils. It is best if you use a gel coat specifically designed for spray granites. Ask your resin supplier what they recommend.

Q: What is the ratio of mixing the Poly Stone?

A: One part Poly Stone, three parts Resin by weight.

Q: How long in advance of spraying should Poly Stone be mixed with the resin?

A: 4 to 6 hours.

Q: What size nozzle should be used in a cup gun?

A: Number 8 or 9.

Q: What mold release should be used?

A: Same one that is being used for the gel coat.

Q: What is the curing time for Poly Stone?

A: This will depend on the temperature in the shop. However, cultured marble generally is faster than Poly Stone.

Featherlite Facts

Featherlite is an extremely white, lightweight filler blend combining calcium carbonate with a high performance plastic light weight micro sphere. It can be used as a direct replacement to cultured marble or as a back fill material for bulk weight reduction.

There are an increasing number of cultured marble companies using light weight fillers and additives in their cultured marble products. Several benefits can be realized from the use of such fillers.

• Better Thermal Shock Performance •

This is especially true for light weight fillers that incorporate plastic micro spheres such as Featherlite. The plastic micro spheres have an elastic property that allows the sphere to stretch and compress while subjected to stress. This elasticity will absorb stress and significantly reduce the likelihood of stress fractures and cracking. The end result is better thermal cycle results and almost no stress cracks resulting from hot cures in the mold.

• Reduced installation labor and workers compensation claims •

Featherlite will reduce the casting weight by 50% over standard calcium carbonate. This results in a reduction of labor for installations of heavy castings such as bath tubs and shower pans. Rather than three or four installers needed to deliver a 350 pound tub, now two can handle the same tub at a weight of 175 pounds. Another benefit is lower workman's compensation claims for back and muscle strain injuries from handling these heavy castings.

• Fewer Warranty Claims •

Tubs and showers made using Featherlite will last longer in the field. One of our customers reported that several years ago they replaced bathtubs at a nearby hotel. On half of the job they used their standard cultured marble and the other half they used tubs made with Featherlite. Seven years later, the hotel called the customer back to replace several tubs that showed cracking. It turned out that the cracked tubs were the ones made without the Featherlite.

"Featherlite will reduce the casting weight by 50% over standard calcium carbonate."

What does it cost to replace cultured marble with Featherlite?

"Tubs and showers made using Featherlite will last longer in the field."

Lets compare the raw material cost of a 150 pound unit made with straight calcium carbonate and the same casting using Featherlite.

Calcium Carbonate unit (150 pounds)			
75% calcium	112.5 @ .07/lb=		\$7.88
25% resin	37.5 @ 1.50/lb=		\$56.25
	Total=		\$64.13

Featherlite Unit (75 pounds)			
50% Featherlite	37.5 lb. @ .55/lb =		\$20.62
50% resin	37.5 lb. @ 1.50/lb=		\$56.25
	Total=		\$78.87

So the raw material cost difference is about \$15.00 for each 150 pounds cast. Notice that the resin usage remains the same for both units. The marginal increase in cost is minimal when compared to the potential savings in producing products of higher quality and better durability.

If you are interested in trying out Featherlite in your plant give us a call at 800-669-9214 for a free sample.

Product Care and Maintenance

One of the benefits of using both Dura Stone® and Poly Stone® as surfaces is the ease of care that both products provide. Each product is available in matte, satin and gloss finishes, requiring basic routine care. Simply clean each surface type regularly with soapy water. It's that simple. Have a more difficult stain to remove? Follow the guidelines below for each surface finish and your cultured stone surface will look like new.



Matte Finishes

For difficult stains, use a mild abrasive cleaner (results shown above), or by using a mix of one part bleach to one part water. If there are minor cuts and scratches in the matte finish, use a Scotchbrite pad (white or gray pad preferred) with the spritz of a little water upon the pad. Then, go over surface until scratches are removed. If the surface has received deeper cuts, the services of a

professional are required for repair.

Satin Finishes

Just as with matte finishes that couldn't be cleaned with soap and water, satin finishes require a stronger solution. Use a cleaner such as Soft Scrub or try a solution of one part bleach to one part water. A white Scotchbright pad may be used on satin finishes for more stubborn stains.

If you're looking to enhance the shine of the surfaces' satin finish on your Poly Stone or Dura Stone surface, use a nonabrasive polish such as Hope's Counter top Polish or Protectall's Quick Shine.

Gloss Finishes

The benefit to a gloss finish is that it is generally more difficult to stain, however that same quality makes gloss finish more difficult to remove stains from. First try using the solution of bleach and water as mentioned above and let it sit for a few minutes before scrubbing. Then, with a soft sponge, use circular motions to clean—for up to fifteen minutes. After fifteen minutes, remove the bleach and water solution with clean water. Never use abrasive cleaners or Scotchbright pads on gloss finishes.

As with most surfaces there are a few precautions that should be observed.

- Do not use your counter top as a cutting board
- Use a pot holder or other heat/cold absorbing device for setting hot pots or frozen foods directly on your work surface
- Use trivets with rubber feet
- Run cold water in sinks made with Poly Stone or Dura Stone before using a colander
- Avoid contact with strong chemicals, such as paint thinners, oven cleaners, drain cleaners, etc. (such items may damage the surface color/finish).

ACS Team



ACS welcomes John Emadipour as the Director of Technology. John has over 20 years of experience in acrylic adhesives and R&D. John has a masters degree in "Polymer Science and Engineering". He has a proven track record of accomplishment in product development, processing and qualification in a variety of chemical areas.

John joins ACS from his previous position as Senior Technical Manager with Callaway Golf Company in California.



ACS welcomes Angela Trejo as Marketing Coordinator. Angela has a strong background in marketing communications and graphic design with over eight years of marketing experience
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