

# American Biltrite Proudly Offers an Array of Rubber Grades: Decoding Rubber Language in an Ever-Changing Industry

*by Tracey Lancaster, American Biltrite*

Selecting sheet rubber is typically a cascade of questions that lead to the correct product. When customers call us for assistance, here are the usual series of questions asked to collect information to bring them to the ideal product:

- Polymer?
- Durometer?
- Grade? ASTM callout?
- Any safety regulations? Examples: Food Grade (FDA), Dairy 3A, NSF/ANSI Standard 61 for potable water, AASHTO grade for highway and bridge construction, Military Specification Grade, MSHA, etc.
- Percentage for a particular polymer? Dimensional tolerance? Or any other special considerations for the specification?

We tend to address requests by learning as much as possible, especially before offering an imported product which may have limited information or test results, for example: elongation, temperature range, ozone resistance, abrasion resistance, oil resistance, compression set, pressure rating, etc.

How you answer these questions should lead you to the product that is ideal for your application. The crucial point is understanding the application and the rubber's role within. Asking questions and ideally attaining the required specification is imperative. Without this information, products can be selected in error with devastating effects both to the project and to your company's reputation. Gathering the data prior to product selection is a step that can never be emphasized enough.

This is NOT to say that imported rubber sheet has no place in the market. Imported sheet is a good economical solution.

It certainly has a place in our product offering. Our imported sheet rolls are very consistent in their physical properties as well as format. Gauge tolerances are commercial sheet rubber standards, full rolls, one piece, and always the same length. To determine if an imported option is best, ask yourself: "Is this application low pressure or less critical?" In other words, when it wears, can it be easily replaced hence remaining a low-cost solution with very little risk? Some good examples:

- Thin gauge pipe wrapping
- Thick gauge pads for equipment
- General gasketing
- Industrial drop sheets for protection, for example in paint shops
- Skirtboard

Where you source your imported sheet rubber is a vital decision for your company. When it comes to your company's reputation, what you supply is what you endorse. At American Biltrite, all our suppliers go through a rigorous qualification process. The first step of this process is a plant tour at the potential supplier's facility by our team including at least one member of senior management. We only import after the completed supplier evaluation process. We receive randomly selected samples for all production runs for testing here in our lab as part of our ongoing audit processes.

We are both ISO 9001 and 14001 certified using the 2015 updated standards. Our quality systems are top notch. Our lab has state of the art testing equipment, and our technicians are part of an experienced and highly skilled quality management team. Within our lab staff, we have six chemists and also three Ph.D.'s.

We also have a quality auditor on site for all offshore productions. With more than ten years of quality control experience and a bachelor's degree, he reports directly to our Vice President of Procurement. He is overseas, and he oversees all productions and validates our products through quality testing before the rolls are ever shipped. We know what we are sourcing, and our low claims prove this consistently.

A clear and positive indication that a supplier will have the know-how and the drive to offer a range of quality imported products is to look carefully at their domestic line. At American Biltrite, we carry products from commercial grades to specification grades like FDA compliant, NSF/ANSI Standard 61 Certified, AASHTO Grade ATLAS BEARING PADS™ (currently under evaluation with AASHTO for approval on the NTPEP program - National Transportation Product Evaluation Program), Military Specification Grades, Transeal® - Premium Nitrile for transformer gaskets, and a full line of wear and lining products encompassed in our DuraShield® and GUARD-RITE™ lines. One-stop shopping for everything from commercial grade materials, to industrial grade, as well as high-performance premium compounds, and everything in between. Always keep in mind that even if you do not see what you need in our catalog, we have thousands of compounds on file for all your rubber needs. Custom is our middle name, let us work with you on a formulation to meet your specific requirements.

Our experienced sales force and technical team are there to assist with product selection. No one has better coverage than American Biltrite, with more than twenty-five salespeople covering the USA and Canada, and nine stocking warehouses for the fastest turnaround times on every stock order. At American Biltrite, we are available to assist with targeted training programs upon request. We would be happy to help you organize education sessions to help your sales team gain product knowledge and sales techniques when presenting our solutions.

Our inside sales team sets the industry standard for service, with twenty years average experience with American Biltrite. Give us a call at 1-888-275-7075. We are here to assist, always with a smile and the professionalism that you deserve.

Your peace of mind is our priority here at American Biltrite. Need sales tools? Ask us about our new Sheet Rubber Selection Kit, a robust toolbox containing all of our standard products. Rubber samples are color coded by polymer that correspond directly to our new Technical Specifications Resource Guide. Our various grades are clearly defined in our new sales aids; for example, you will find twenty Neoprene products distinguished by grade. Give our customer service a ring to order your new state-of-the-art sales tools and receive the best service in the industry.

# JOIN THE GFA'S DISASTER RECOVERY PROGRAM

The GFA is very proud to offer a disaster recovery program, which allows Regular (Fabricator) members to benefit from knowing that in the event of a disaster, their businesses will be protected, and their customers will continue to have their product and service needs met. In the event of a disaster, this program will give you quick access to fellow GFA members whose capabilities best match what you may need.

## KEY BENEFITS

Enhanced risk management that will help your business comply with ISO standards.

A negotiating tool for your commercial insurance (potential premium savings).

Peace of mind knowing that you have a plan for disaster recovery, and that you can continue to serve your customers while you recover (Your customers will be glad you are prepared!).

Stronger sense of community, allowing GFA members to have the opportunity to support one another through difficult times.

## HOW TO SIGN UP

To begin, simply contact Pete Lance at +1-610-971-4850 or [pete@gasketfab.com](mailto:pete@gasketfab.com) for instructions on setting up your disaster recovery profile. Your profile information will be entered directly into a secure and confidential database, which will be exclusively used to match you with another program participant in the case of a disaster.