

Too Good To Be True?

Cherokee Nation Cuts Fumes and Labor Costs With Soy-based Paint Stripper and Mastic Remover

Gary Cantrell, health facilities maintenance manager at the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma, read about the effectiveness of BEAN•e•doo®, a biobased mastic remover, in a trade magazine and he thought to himself, “That’s gotta be a lie, but I gotta try it anyway.”

Gary and his crew needed to take up black mastic from a floor in one of their hospital’s ear, nose and throat clinics to install carpet. “We have no idea what this black stuff is, but from past experience with it, we know it has to come up or it will bleed right into any new carpet we put down. We’ve tried everything we can to remove it chemically without any luck, and the only way we were able to get it up is by literally scraping the stuff off the concrete and that took hours of hard work,” he says.

And with BEAN•e•doo? “It took two coats and overnight, but it came up completely. I’m perfectly satisfied with the way it worked. It saved my crew lots of time and some very hard work,” he states.

In fact, he was so pleased with the mastic remover that he decided to use another of the manufacturer’s biobased products, SOYGel™ paint remover, on another recent project. “This was the basement room of a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center. The facility was constructed back in the 1930s, and the cinder block walls had to have at least 10 coats of paint on them. I budgeted four weeks for my crew to complete the entire job, figuring it would take two work weeks to get the old paint off the walls,” he explains.

“We put the soy strip on and in 20 minutes that old paint was literally running off the walls. We finished the paint stripping part of the project in just two days. Sure the product cost a little more, but we more than made that cost up in labor savings,” he says.

“It was all water-based and oil-based paint so we didn’t have to worry about lead, but this product really amazed my crew and me,” he concludes.

Gary pointed out that the lack of fumes associated with these soy-based products is particularly important since his work is in health facilities. “We have to be very conscious of patient comfort and safety,” he says. “These products will let us do our job whenever we need to without bothering anyone. When it comes to waste disposal, it takes no special handling. Because there are no harsh chemicals, we can just handle it the same way we would the paint itself.”



Chuck Studie applies SOYGel™ paint remover at a Cherokee Nation facility. Staff have used the product to remove at least 10 coats of old paint from cinder block walls. They appreciated the lack of fumes with the product that let them complete the project in only two days instead of the traditional two weeks of work.

In total, Gary is in charge of maintenance for 11 health facilities in ten communities in the Cherokee Nation in Northeast Oklahoma. The facilities range from new hospitals like the one in Salina to older ones like the Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Center mentioned above.

U.S. Postal Service Recommends/Uses BEAN•e•doo®



The Cherokee Nation is using soy biobased products at 11 health facilities in Oklahoma. From left, Darrell Trammel, Chuck Studie and Health Facilities Maintenance Manager Gary Cantrell were surprised that the products were so effective and pleased that they cut fumes and labor costs.

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) conducted numerous safety and efficacy tests on BEAN•e•doo starting in 2000. Those tests concentrated in several areas, including how well the product worked in capturing asbestos particles, general toxicity and the types of protective gear needed to keep workers safe. After laboratory testing and controlled use at various locations and situations throughout the U.S. Postal Service Northeast Region facilities, the product was classified as a Class Three asbestos removal product (which means USPS employees can use it without a respirator) because it is biodegradable, contains no volatile organic compounds, has a mild odor and is user friendly.

The same tests demonstrated considerable cost savings for the Post Office. “This product removes mastic, which often contains asbestos. If it didn’t work, we’d have to contract with outside remediation firms that specialize in removing materials containing asbestos. The cost for us to do it is sixty cents a square foot. The cost for an outside contractor to do it is \$1.76 per square foot—that’s a savings of almost 300 percent. In addition, we are now using it to remove floor tiles, too. Just here in our Northeast Region (New England and New York, except New York City) that adds up to big money because we estimate about 40,000 cases per year,” states James Hennessey, USPS Albany District Environmental Coordinator.

Based on the Northeast Region tests, BEAN•e•doo is now recommended by the USPS throughout the nation.

For more details on these tests, contact the United Soybean Board, at the address and/or phone number below and request the USPS Profile published in 2003. That publication also contains contact information at the USPS.

FACT FILE

BEAN•e•doo and SOYGel are two of many biobased products manufactured by Franmar Chemical, Inc. in Normal, Illinois. For more than 16 years, Franmar has worked to turn soybean oil into numerous environmentally friendly products, ranging from lead-based paint removers to hand lotions. More information is available at www.franmar.com or by calling 309-862-1005.

To learn more about Gary Cantrell’s experience with these products, you can call him at 918-458-7624.

America’s farms are just beginning to tap their potential as a source for natural, renewable biobased products that offer benefits to worker health, the environment, America’s economy and energy security.

To learn more about the many biobased products made from soybeans like the ones used by Cherokee Nation and USPS, go to the Biobased Products Catalog at www.unitedsoybean.org/newuses.

Because of the potential for biobased products to create new markets for soybeans, U.S. soybean farmers have invested more than \$50 million to research, test and promote biobased products. Much of this work was done through the United Soybean Board (USB), which is composed of 62 U.S. soybean farmers appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to invest soybean checkoff funds.

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