Elston Manufacturing

Memo

To: Users of Elston Sanders

From: Scott

Last Updated: Oct. 15, 2010

Re: Grit Recommendations

One of the most common questions on the traction sanders is the type of grit that should be used. We recommend that the grit used in the sanders meet the requirements below for the most reliable performance of the unit.

- **Material**
  The grit used in the sander should first of all be dry and free flowing. It should be low in silt, dust, or other materials that cause the material to clump as it dries. Quartz or other siliceous materials are ideal but other materials are acceptable as long as they are dense enough to make it to the pavement with out blowing away and hard enough to provide traction between the wheel (and not turn into powder or completely flatten).
- **Grain Shape**
  The grit should be largely irregular shaped grains of an approximately rounded shape. The shape of most crushed materials is acceptable.
- **Grain Size**
  Material with grains longer than 1/2" or more than 3/8" in diameter should be avoided to prevent clogging the sander. The material should not have more than a small percentage of fines or vibration will cause the material to compact and not flow out of the tank. For this reason, most sand will not work.

A material sized #7 #20 or #16 #20 is ideal and a material sized #4 #20 is usually acceptable. A number of materials can meet the requirements above. The materials below are those most commonly asked about by our current users.

Fullers Earth based Floor Dry

This material is a specific type of clay that is mined and is one of the three most common materials sold as floor dry. It works well as long as the grain size meets the above recommendations. An example of a product that works is Safe T Sorb by Multon Industries. It is available at Tractor Supply stores for around $4 per 40lb bag. It is the easiest material to find and keep dry but does not provide quite as much traction as the other materials.

Coal Slag

This product works well as long as it isn't too fine or have too much fine material. It can be economical as long as it is produced locally. Avoid mixes with material finer than #20.

Sand

Most sand will not work if it is wet or has too much fine material. Sand with excessive fines will quickly become too firmly packed to flow out of the sander although it may appear to work fine when first

added to the sander. If the sand is dry, clumps are removed, and it is not prone to compaction (see grain size recommendations), it will work in your sander. Something like a dry sifted “playground” sand may do the trick. The tube sand sold for ballast may not since it often has pieces that is too large and get stuck or too fine and cause compaction.

Crushed Rock

Crushed rock is an inexpensive product that works well as long as it is the correct size and dry. It can be difficult to find dry so often it will require an extra drying step.

Salt

Salt requires more maintenance of the sander to prevent corrosion and may decrease the operating life of the unit. Most blends of salt have a tendency to clump or harden with exposure to humid air and need to be closely monitored to ensure the material is flowing well through the sander.