



**AHLSTROM
MUNKSJÖ**

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Security fibers used at Ahlstrom-Munksjö to assure greater product traceability **Protecting abrasive backings from counterfeits throughout the value chain**

Ahlstrom-Munksjö supplies fiber-based and custom-made specialized industrial materials including a range of abrasive backings.

An increasing number of producers of coated abrasives are being confronted with the challenge of global counterfeiting. Ahlstrom-Munksjö's solution to the counterfeit challenge within the abrasive backings industry is the use of security fibers. The technology is registered under the label BE SECURE™.

Counterfeiting is a global problem that in recent years has been estimated to account for 2-3 per cent of world trade. The publicity for counterfeit retail consumer products may create a perception that counterfeiting only results in brand erosion and revenue losses, but counterfeit products can also be found as replacement parts or as components in different applications in many industries.



Blue security fibers as visible in natural light in an abrasive backing (left) and fluorescent security fibers visible under an ultraviolet light (right).

Security fibers are added to the coated abrasive backing paper to secure that it is easy for producers to identify the quality of the product and avoid counterfeits. The fibers are embedded in the backing paper during manufacturing and include both colored and fluorescent fibers.

Security fibers can be used to assure product traceability, without affecting either the mechanical or chemical characteristics of the backing paper. This limits the risk of counterfeiting and enables producers to clearly identify the requested product quality, when the material is further processed in the value chain. By using the requested quality, the users of the abrasive product can protect themselves from potential breaks or damages in the production process and potential health injuries when the product is used in industrial sanding.

“Offering our customers a solution that assures product traceability is a clear differentiating factor for us. Our Chinese customer Zibo Riken, a manufacturer of coated abrasive, chose a custom-made fluorescent fiber to be used in the products we supply them. Through this unique product specification, they were able to secure a stable product quality and were able to increase their sales volume significantly” says Daniel Qiu, Sales Manager at Ahlstrom-Munksjö.

Abrasive backings are specialty papers that are used as a substrate for abrasive products used both in industrial and do-it yourself (DIY) sanding applications ranging from grinding to super fine finishing operations. Ahlstrom-Munksjö is well positioned in this market and offers a complete range of backings, including a variety of grades tailored for each application. The abrasive business is part of Ahlstrom-Munksjö's Industrial Solutions business area.

For further information, please contact:

Estelle Seibert, Marketing Manager, Abrasive
mob. +33 (0)6 82 80 26 73, email: estelle.seibert@ahlstrom-munksjo.com

Laura Lindholm, Media Relations Manager
mob. +46 (0)72 703 63 36, email: media@ahlstrom-munksjo.com