

Issue 23,
Oct 2011

HUMMINGS

official newsletter from the
HOME OF THE HUMMEL

Welcome to HUMMINGS, the official customer newsletter from LAGLER AUSTRALIA. In this issue we provide another in-depth technical piece on Hummel maintenance. We also look at some **direct stick** issues discussed at a recent ATFA Trade Evening.

Don't forget our website www.lagler.com.au and our news blog at www.lagler.wordpress.com. It's the only floorsanding blog of its kind in Australia, and it's building up with tonnes of useful information and tips. Get onto it, leave some comments, and join the conversation!

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MONTHLY SPECIALS

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STICKY BUSINESS



Glue Down to concrete - still a viable option?

Another successful ATFA Trade Evening has been and gone. If you didn't go, here's a snippet of what you missed.

Glue Down of timber flooring to concrete slabs still scares the willies out of some contractors. What they don't know, still hurts them.

Follow a few simple procedures, know your standards, and it needn't be a nightmarish issue, says George Villars of Handley Industries. Handley's manufacture a range of adhesives and vapour barriers in close consultation with the trade, and George travelled from New Zealand for the ATFA trade evening. Firstly, in the case of new slabs, check with the builder the thickness of the slab, and how long it has been enclosed. This way you will know how long it has been exposed to additional moisture other than its own inherent moisture. Either way, you *must* test the moisture levels.

Crucially, the AU/NZ standards on moisture levels for any flooring are under review in Australia. The review pertains to whether the use of slab moisture content or relative humidity (RH) should be the main criteria. RH is the "transmission" of moisture vapour above the slab, which is precisely what you need to know if attempting to stick something onto the slab. Most industry pundits are in favour of this criteria.

Either way, you must test moisture levels

"We prefer the Digital Hygrometer using probes for greater accuracy" says George. "If the RH is at or above 70% (The AU/NZ standard) then applying a vapour barrier is required. It's also a good idea to do a follow-up RH test after the Vapour Barrier is applied, to test its performance." The method for this test is the "surface mounted hygrometer", also known as the "Non-destructive Hood Method" (see picture right).



Another important consideration when applying a vapour barrier, is that the recommendations of the manufacturer may actually have to be exceeded at the discretion of the contractor. "Since the standards have been changed (*Ed's note- in NZ they have been changed to RH*), this puts manufacturer's specs (as to the number of coats) under greater scrutiny" says George. In other words, it might not be enough to say "I applied a coat as per the manufacturer's recommendations". It's down to whether your application has reduced the RH to the level required by the standard. This is Handley's preferred advice when it comes to their Vapour Stop. One coat should be enough, but two might be required. It depends upon the test.

George continues "Sad to say, but we have had instances where builders or associated stakeholders have not been entirely honest, or at least accurate, about the thickness of the slab or the time of exposure to ambient moisture (the "close-in" time). Doing the right testing makes you less vulnerable to these factors."

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THE WHEEL TRUTH

Don't make waves

In our last issue, we talked about drums, and how the simple little things like failing to keep it clean can cause a litany of sanding issues of your floor. One of those seemingly unlikely things was sanding “waves”. Even a buildup of sawdust and rubbish can imbalance your drum and make it sand unevenly.

However, when addressing the issue of a wavy, undulating sand, the first place we look is at the wheels. It makes sense- if the wheels are out of round, the drum will pivot up and down accordingly like a see-saw and put more pressure up and down, to create waves. This includes the rear wheel, of course. This also comes after checking sub-floor issues. A poorly prepared sub-floor can lead to waves. Waves can follow the joists and bearers in the timber if the sub-floor is not up to spec. Even on overlay floors- where secret nailing is used, but not enough adhesive is used in between, the poorly-fastened section of the floor can vibrate under the machinery and cause chatter.

Firstly, some housekeeping: Up to 1999, the Hummel wheels consisted of the “wheel and tyre” setup, with a replaceable tyre surrounding a wheel. It's the floor sanding machine equivalent of low-profile tyres.



As sexy as low-profile tyres are, Lagler Germany decided in 1999 to up-rate the wheels to a more solid, “higher profile” type, more like a tractor tyre. They're made of a composite nolathane, much like the material used for suspension bushes in race cars. Note the gratuitous use of race car analogies and pictures. We can't help it.



At this point, we would advise that if you still have the pre- 1999 wheel and tyre setup, it might be time to change over. It's becoming harder to get the old part and besides, the new system works better. The changeover is relatively simple and will not equate to any major down time.

Cont'd from previous page

So, you must keep your wheels clean. The weight of the machine and the nature of the stuff they run over causes quite the build-up of dense, solid material to put the wheel out of round. Cleaning it off is not so easy, and it's important to be thorough. We suggest using a 2" Allway scraper, positioned in such a way so as to scrape the wheel as you turn it around. Note, you must prop the scraper against the body of the machine, so as to keep it steady. Some diluted solvents on a rag can help loosen the muck.



Our hand model demonstrates the best method for cleaning Hummel Wheels. Pop Quiz: Are the wheels pictured here made before or after May 1999?

It might look innocuous, but this muck can seriously affect the sanding result

Don't underestimate the effect dirty wheels can make on a sanding result. You might not get deep undulations in the floor, but the slight, momentary change in drum pressure can produce a different tone.



Remember, as you are looking at the underside of the machine; the further the wheel away from you, the heavier it will sand on that side. Only one wheel is adjustable, and it is marked with a rudimentary black arrow.

While you're playing with your wheels, it might also be timely to check the balance of your side (main) wheels, as these will affect whether or not your drum is sanding heavier on one side. If you still have your Hummel Toolkit, find the wheel setting fixture tool and use it as per the picture (left). When the Hummel is manufactured, the default setting is to sand heavier on the right hand side. This is due to the offset of the wheels, and helps the machine to sand flatter if you sand from the left side of the room to the right.

Spanner out!

the SPANNER

New Products More soft stuff

No matter how many times you tell them not to drag heavy furniture over their newly sanded and finished floor, they still go and drag heavy furniture over their newly sanded floor. Next, the phone calls, the complaint about scratches, and so on. It makes you double guess yourself, and wonder whether you forgot to tell them that if they lead a herd of Elephants through their house they should probably expect scratches.

Well, all that (except the ridiculous bit about elephants) could be a thing of the past with the EZ-MOVES FURNITURE BLOCKS. Strong and sturdy, with felt undersides, these things pop under a couch, or whichever, so it can be dragged around the room without peeling off the polyurethane. They're inexpensive, so you may choose to throw them in as a value-added part of your service. Yes, at Lagler, we love to make you look good!

