

Environmentally friendly solvent replaces MPK

BY RONALD G. BLISS

A new biodegradable, recyclable, water-based nonflammable chemical being used to clean paint guns and equipment at Boeing Wichita is giving smiles to environmental officials and employees who work with that process every day.

The chemical — Acrastrip 600 B&G — dilutes with water and is recyclable and nonflammable, and can be substituted for methyl propyl ketone (MPK) a much harsher chemical.

Randy Miller, a member of the Boeing Chemical Process management group, said, "MPK was identified by the Boeing Wichita Pollution Prevention team as a chemical that we wanted to

either reduce or eliminate at our site.

"Acrastrip is going to help us drastically reduce the amount of MPK that we currently use."

The new solvent was tested in different locations at Boeing Wichita including the Manufacturing Process Facility (MPF) where a variety of aircraft parts are painted daily.

It has been successfully tested by Manufacturing Research and Development (MR&D) at several locations and with different applications.

Boeing Wichita has 60 areas such as paint booths

where the new solvent could be used.

Glenn Hopper, MR&D research

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Randy Allen photo

Bruce Gass, Tooling lead, uses a biodegradable solution to clean a paint gun in the "Bonny Marlin" recycle system in the Struts and Nacelle Building.

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'Good solution for cleaning paint guns and equipment'

analyst, said, "Any chemical such as the Acrastrip 600 that has proven to be an environmental benefit and works successfully in the production areas should be tested and implemented.

"MR&D performs the required tests and is just one part of the Boeing Wichita team efforts supporting the reduction and improvement of chemical use," he said.

Miller said the main use of the new solvent is for cleaning paint guns at the end of the day.

"Our problem was removing paint from our paint equipment without using harsh chemicals that are flammable," he said.

"We think we've come up with a good solution for that."