



**Latent Print Section**  
**Sticky Side Powder-Wetwop**  
Comparative & Analytical Division



## 1. Processing evidence using Sticky Side Powder/Wetwop

### 1.1 Scope

- 1.1.1 This document details the procedure for the mixing and application of Sticky Side Powder/Wetwop on adhesive surfaces by the Latent Print Section of the Houston Forensic Science Center (HFSC).

### 1.2 Equipment, Materials, and Reagents

- 1.2.1 Sticky Side Powder
- 1.2.1.1 Surfactant (Ex. Kodak Photo Flo 200, EZflo)
  - 1.2.1.2 Distilled Water
  - 1.2.1.3 Fingerprint Powder
  - 1.2.1.4 Equipment: Balances, beakers, camel hair brush, and clean dish
- 1.2.2 Wetwop
- 1.2.2.1 Wetwop™ premixed kit
  - 1.2.2.2 Equipment: Camel hair brush and clean dish

### 1.3 Safety

- 1.3.1 Examiners/Processors shall wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) while preparing and applying Sticky Side Powder/Wetwop™.
- 1.3.2 See applicable Safety Data Sheet (SDS).

### 1.4 Preparation of Sticky Side Powder

- 1.4.1 Working Solution
- 1.4.1.1 Combine equal parts of a surfactant such as Kodak Photo Flo 200™ or EZflo with distilled water and shake well.
  - 1.4.1.2 Add approximately 1 tsp of fingerprint powder and mix.  
NOTE: Depending on the consistency, more or less fingerprint powder may be required to acquire the consistency of thin paste.
  - 1.4.1.3 Sticky side powder has an indefinite shelf life. The expiration date for the working solution will be that of the of the surfactant, if applicable.

### 1.5 Preparation of Wetwop

- 1.5.1 Wetwop is a commercially prepared solution.
- 1.5.2 Place the appropriate safety label and information on the bottle. Proper labeling should include:
- Name of Reagent
  - Date of Preparation
  - Date of Expiration (if applicable)
  - Preparer's name or initials
  - Batch Number
- 1.5.3 Wetwop™ has an indefinite shelf life provided the reagent check is satisfactory.

### 1.6 Procedure



- 1.6.1 Apply Sticky Side Powder or Wetwop by using a camel hair brush and then painting the reagent on the items of evidence.
- 1.6.2 Choose the appropriate color Sticky Side Powder or Wetwop that will give the best contrast to the substrate you are processing and pour a small amount into a dish.
- 1.6.3 Using a small camel hair brush, apply the Sticky Side Powder or Wetwop to the adhesive surface until the entire surface is covered. Let sit for short time before viewing.
- 1.6.4 Rinse the reagent off of the adhesive side with cold tap water and let air dry.
- 1.6.5 Items that have been processed with Sticky Side Powder/Wetwop™ are viewed under white light.

### **1.7 QA/QC**

- 1.7.1 A Quality Control Check must be performed before use each day and/or when Wetwop is opened, or before Sticky Side Powder is placed into service.
- 1.7.2 A successful Quality Control Check is one in which a positive test result is achieved. A positive test result is one in which the test print is visible under white light after processing.
- 1.7.3 To perform a Quality Control Check apply finger to a Sebaceous Oil Standard Pad and place a test print on the adhesive side of tape. (Matrix = Sebaceous Oil Standard and Epithelial Cells; Substrate = Adhesive side of Tape.) Apply Sticky Side Powder/Wetwop as described above.

### **1.8 Records/Results**

- 1.8.1 Processes used are documented in the case examiner's/processor's case notes via the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS).
- 1.8.2 Reagent test results are recorded in Qualtrax.

### **1.9 Storage**

- 1.9.1 Discard any unused Sticky Side Powder.
- 1.9.2 Store **unused** commercial Wetwop™ in its original container.

### **1.10 References**

Burns, D., "Sticky Side Powder, the Japanese Solution", *Journal of Forensic Identification*; Vol. 44, No 2, March/April 1994, pp. 133-138.

Defense Forensic Science Center, *CILA LP 57.2, Sticky Side Powder/Wetwop*, 07 February 2014

Gray, M., "Sticky-side Powder versus Gentian Violet: A Search for a Superior Method for Processing the Sticky Side of Adhesive Tape", *Journal of Forensic Identification*, Vol. 45, no. 3, pp. 268-272.

Lo, I. K. L., "A Review on Detection of Latent Prints on Self-Adhesive Tapes," *Fingerprint World*, 19(74), p. 89, 1993.



Sneddon, N., "Black Powder Method to Process Duct Tape," *Journal of Forensic Identification*, 49(4), p. 347, 1999.

U.S. Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Investigation Laboratory Division, *Processing Guide for Developing Latent Prints*, 2000

**Wording removed from previous versions**

<b>Clause</b>	<b>Wording Removed</b>
<b>1.4.1.3</b>	The date of expiration for batch solutions of Sticky Side Powder will be one year from the date of preparation.
<b>1.5.3</b>	The date of expiration for Wetwop will be one year from the date the container is opened.
<b>1.10</b>	Trozzi, T. A., Schwartz, R. L., and Hollars, M. L., <i>Processing Guide for Developing Latent Prints</i> , FBI Laboratory, Washington DC, 2001 <i>Processing Guide for Developing Latent Prints</i> , US Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2000 Edition.
<b>1.2.1.3</b>	(1 tsp)