

CA ADHESIVE IDEAS

From Jerry's Jottings

By Jerry Smith LM-12

Let's talk about CA adhesive. We all use this miracle grabber to a certain degree. There are many brands and types on the market from which to choose. Each one claims that theirs is the best. You can invest a good sum of money in CA. It isn't cheap. If you don't use it all within a certain period of time, you end up with none. The biggest problems in using CA is the efficient management of waste and keeping the spout clear. It's a pain to pick up a bottle, expect to apply a little CA, and find that the tip is clogged.

I received a couple of ideas recently that had to do with the use of CA. I thought they were interesting and would like to share them with you... The first is from John Eades, Seattle, Washington. John says: "I build a lot and to save a little money I buy CA glues in the economy 2 oz. bottles. If the thick "Super T" type glue is not used up in six months, it sets becoming progressively more viscous and difficult to use. Previously, I would just cut the top down on the spout to get the molasses-like stuff out. I would use more than needed, and eventually, would throw the jelled remainder away. Some savings! Then I found I could dilute the old thick CA with regular thin CA enabling me to use the thick CA to the last drop. By controlling the thinning rate, I can tailor the glue consistency to serve any need - slightly thicker than thin, or thinner than thick. The mixing does not seem to affect the CA chemistry, except to alter consistency. Usually only a few drops of the thin CA serves the need."

This idea does work however, the shelf life is reduced significantly when CA is poured through an atmosphere of ambient moisture. This is not a problem for the modeler who is going to use the product quickly. The major problem with this idea is that some people are bound to spill when pouring and/or knock over the bottle. Spilling is costly and can make a real mess, especially when two ounce bottles are involved. My recommendation to a modeler doing this is; If the product becomes unusable, seal the unused portion and put it in a plastic Zip-Lock type bag. Then send it back to the manufacturer for replacement. Most companies have a least a year guarantee. If the product happens to be Satellite City Hot Stuff, there is no time restriction. They will gladly replace it. One good reason to buy Hot Stuff.

Here is another suggestion as explained, in part, in a letter from Glenn Godbee, Abilene, TX. Seems like Glenn, while building his first RC model, got some advice from a fellow modeler. His friend explained that the best method of assembling an aircraft is to cut, sand, and fit the frame in place using T-pins and then using Zap-thin tack all the joints. However, using the wick applicator that came with Zap is a pain in the neck and can be downright hazardous. Constantly dipping the wick for one drop applications and having the tip flick a small amount onto your hands, face, or on the model is simply a royal pain. When Glenn suggested using a hypodermic needle and syringe, his friend laughed. He simply could not believe that it would work.

Glenn decided to try this new applicator despite his misgivings. He purchased four 22 gauge 1 1/2 inch hypodermic needles and syringes at 18 cents apiece. He filled the syringe exactly like a nurse would, up to the 10 cc mark. This worked. Glenn used it for a week, refilling it several times, with no problem.

Using a hypodermic needle does present a safety problem. Not evident until a careless reach across the workbench results in the thing hanging from ones arm. My recommendation, if asked by anyone doing this, would be; use a product with a long enough applicator to suit and, with a tiny orifice at the tip, so small amounts are dispensed. If necessary, use applicator tubing in 1/2 inch lengths inserted into the spout. Naturally the spout would have to be cut back carefully to accommodate the tubing OD. Once done the tubing can be replaced easily, if necessary.

In my For What It's Worth column, September '88 issue, I presented a suggestion by Scott Bouthton of Lufkin, TX. It was Scott's way of keeping the CA glue spout clean and clear by keeping them soaked in a small container of Acetone until ready for use.

Bill Hunter, Satellite City Inc. (Hot Stuff) passed along the following valuable information which you will find very useful when using CA glue. Here's what Bill had to say: "A little can of Acetone on a bench, where heat guns and cigarettes may also be found, can turn into a rather large fire if tipped over. Keep it someplace safe.

Unless a spout is completely clean and dry, the Acetone will, in fact, cause the spout to re-clog. If the spout is put on the bottle still wet from the Acetone, it's very likely that the whole bottle will cure in anywhere from an hour to a couple of days. This is very important to us a Satellite City. When this happens the bottle of glue may be blamed instead of the Acetone.

The best way of keeping a spout clear is to stay within a few basic rules:

- A. Never use instant glue just out of the freezer. Allow time to return it to room temp before opening.
- B. Never return a bottle, that has ever been opened, to cold storage.
- C. Avoid spraying accelerator in the direction of an exposed spout.
- D. Avoid dragging the tip of the spout through wood dust during application.
- E. The more sanding dust in the workshop, the more likely the spout will clog.
- F. Never bite the tip of the spout to remove a clog.
- G. Never put pins or paper clips or anything in the spout to keep it clear.
- H. Always use the overcap during sanding or when the bottle is to be left for an hour or more.

You can see from the above that the main culprit is MOISTURE. A, B, F, and G are all about moisture i.e.: A and B cold and condensation - F water from the mouth - G trace

moisture on everything, including pins. C, D, E, and H are about materials foreign to the glue. Moisture can be counted among these too. Remember, when a clog happens due to any of the above, the glue is doing exactly what it is supposed to do - CURE!