



3M™ Glass Microspheres

Floated Product Series

Introduction

3M™ Glass Microspheres are engineered hollow glass microspheres that are alternatives to conventional fillers and additives such as silicas, calcium carbonate, talc, clay, etc., for many demanding applications. These low-density particles are used in a wide range of industries to reduce part weight, lower costs and enhance product properties.

The unique spherical shape of 3M glass microspheres offers a number of important benefits, including: higher filler loading, lower viscosity/improved flow, and reduced shrinkage and warpage. It also helps the 3M glass microspheres blend readily into compounds, and makes them adaptable to a variety of production processes, including spraying, casting and molding. In addition, they offer greater survivability under demanding processing conditions, such as injection molding, and also produce stable voids, which results in low thermal conductivity and a low dielectric constant.

The chemically stable soda-lime-borosilicate glass composition of 3M glass microspheres provides excellent water resistance, to create more stable emulsions. They are also non-combustible and non-porous, so they do not absorb resin. And, their low alkalinity gives 3M glass microspheres compatibility with most resins, stable viscosity and long shelf life.

3M Glass Microspheres Floated Series offer the same combination of strength and light weight as standard 3M glass microspheres, with an added surface treatment of special coupling agents, for use in high-tech applications such as aerospace and hydrospace syntactic foam, radomes and printed wire boards. They are available in a variety of sizes and grades to meet various product and processing requirements.

Typical Properties
(Not for Specification Purposes)

Nitrogen Isostatic Crush Strength (3M QCM 14.1.5)

Product	Test Pressure (psi)	Target Fractional Survival	Minimum Fractional Survival
A16/500	500	90%	80%
A20/1000	1,000	90%	80%
H20/1000	1,000	90%	80%
D32/4500	4,500	90%	80%
H50/10,000 EPX*	10,000	90%	80%

*Per ASTM D3102-78 in glycerol.

True Density (3M QCM 14.24.1)

Product	Typical	True Density (g/cc)	
		Minimum	Maximum
A16/500	0.16	0.14	0.18
A20/1000	0.20	0.18	0.22
H20/1000	0.20	0.18	0.22
D32/4500	0.32	0.30	0.34
H50/10,000 EPX	0.50	0.47	0.53

Chemical Resistance

In general, the chemical properties of 3M™ Glass Microspheres resemble those of a soda-lime-borosilicate glass.

Surface Treatment

A16/500, A20/1000 and D32/4500 have methacrylate chromic chloride surface treatment, H20/1000 and H50/10,000 EPX have epoxy silane surface treatment.

Packing Factor (Ratio of bulk density to true particle density)

Varies from 55% to 68%.

Oil Absorption

31-36 g oil/100 cc of 3M glass microspheres, per ASTM D1483.

Typical
Properties
(continued)

Thermal Properties

Conductivity

0.07-0.22 W/m·K at 32°F (0°C), based on theoretical calculations. Conductivity increases with temperature and product density. The thermal conductivity of a composite will depend on the matrix material and volume loading of 3M™ Glass Microspheres.

Stability

Appreciable changes in microsphere properties may occur above 1112°F (600°C) depending on temperature and duration of exposure.

Flotation (3M QCM 37.1)

Product	Floaters (% by bulk volume) Minimum
A16/500	99%
A20/1000	99%
H20/1000	99%
D32/4500	99%
H50/10,000 EPX	99%

Volatile Content (3M QCM 1.5.7)

Maximum of 0.5 percent by weight.

Alkalinity (3M QCM 55.19)

Maximum of 0.3 milliequivalents per gram

pH

Since 3M glass microspheres are a dry powder, pH is not defined. The pH effect will be determined by the alkalinity as indicated above. When 3M glass microspheres are mixed with deionized water at 5 volume percent loading, the resulting pH of the slurry is typically 9.1 to 9.9, as measured by a pH meter.

Typical
Properties
(continued)

Dielectric Constant

1.3 to 1.5 @ 100 MHz, based on theoretical calculations. The dielectric constant of a composite will depend on the matrix material and volume loading of 3M™ Glass Microspheres.

Size

Product	Particle Size (microns, by volume) (3M QCM 193.0)			
	Distribution			Effective Top Size
	10 th %	50 th %	90 th %	95 th %
A16/500	35	70	115	135
A20/1000	30	60	100	120
D32/4500	20	40	70	85
H20/1000	25	55	90	110
H50/10,000 EPX	20	40	50	60

Hard Particles (3M QCM 93.4.3)

No hard particles (e.g., glass slag, flow agent, etc.) greater than U.S. number 40 (420 microns) standard sieve will exist.

Sieve Analysis (3M QCM 93.4.4)

For *A16/500*, *A20/1000*, *H20/1000* glass microspheres:

Using a 10 gram sample on a U.S. number 80 standard sieve (177 microns), a maximum of five percent by weight glass microspheres will be retained on the sieve.

For *D32/4500*, *H50/10,000 EPX* glass microspheres:

Using a 10 gram sample on a U.S. number 200 sieve (74 microns), a maximum of three percent by weight glass microspheres will be retained on the sieve.

Appearance (3M QCM 22.85)

White to the unaided eye. *A16/500*, *A20/1000*, and *D3L/4500* have a green tint from the surface treatment.

Typical
Properties
(continued)

Flowability (3M QCM 22.83)

3M™ Glass Microspheres remain free flowing for at least one year from the date of shipment if stored in the original, unopened container in the minimum storage conditions of an unheated warehouse.

Labeling

Glass microspheres will be packaged in suitable containers to help prevent damage during normal handling and shipping. Each container will be labeled with:

1. Name of manufacturer
2. Type of 3M glass microspheres
3. Lot number
4. Quantity in pounds

Storage and Handling

To help ensure ease of storage and handling while maintaining free flowing properties, 3M™ Glass Microspheres have been made from a chemically stable glass and are packaged in a heavy duty polyethylene bag within a cardboard container.

Minimum storage conditions should be unopened cartons in an unheated warehouse.

Under high humidity conditions with the ambient temperature cycling over a wide range, moisture can be drawn into the bag as the temperature drops and the air contracts. The result may be moisture condensation within the bag. Extended exposure to these conditions may result in “caking” of the 3M glass microspheres to various degrees. To minimize the potential for “caking” and prolong the storage life, the following suggestions are made:

1. Carefully re-tie open bags after use.
2. If the polyethylene bag is punctured during shipping or handling, use this bag as soon as possible, patch the hole, or insert the contents into an undamaged bag.
3. During humid summer months, store in the driest, coolest space available.
4. If good storage conditions are unavailable, carry a minimum inventory, and process on a first in/first out basis.

Dusting problems that may occur while handling and processing can be minimized by the following procedures:

1. For eye protection wear chemical safety goggles. For respiratory system protection wear an appropriate NIOSH/MSHA-approved respirator. (For additional information about personal protective equipment, refer to Material Safety Data Sheet.)
2. Use appropriate ventilation in the work area.
3. Pneumatic conveyor systems have been used successfully to transport 3M glass microspheres without dusting from shipping containers to batch mixing equipment. Static eliminators should be used to help prevent static charges.

Diaphragm pumps have been used to successfully convey 3M glass microspheres. Vendors should be consulted for specific recommendations.

3M glass microsphere breakage may occur if the product is improperly processed. To minimize breakage, avoid high shear processes such as high-speed Cowles Dissolvers, point contact shear such as gear pumps or 3-roll mills, and processing pressures above the strength test pressure for each product.

Health, Safety
and Environmental
Information

For product Health, Safety and Environmental information, please read product label and Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) before using product.

Packaging
Information

Mini-Box

A single corrugated box with a plastic liner.
Box dimensions are 16 in. × 16 in. × 20 in.

Small Box (10 Cubic ft.)

A single corrugated box with a plastic liner. All boxes are banded together and to the wooden pallet. 4 boxes per pallet.

Box dimensions are 22 in. × 19 in. × 39 in.
Pallet size is 42 in. × 48 in.

Box Weights

Product	Mini-Box	Small Box
A16/500	10 lb.	50 lb.
A20/1000	10 lb.	50 lb.
H20/1000	10 lb.	50 lb.
D32/4500	10 lb.	100 lb.
H50/10,000 EPX	10 lb.	100 lb.

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