

QUESTION

Can you recommend some products for masking hot-dip galvanized steel?

ANSWER

Masking products are applied to specific areas of steel when the galvanized coating on those areas would interfere with the end use of the product (such as on faying surfaces), or when additional work needs to be done on masked areas and a galvanized coating would make the work more difficult or expensive (such as on areas that will be welded or on fasteners that cannot have any additional width from a zinc coating).

Of course, any time steel is masked, there will be no corrosion protection of the steel in those areas. The unmasked areas will not affect the corrosion protection of the galvanized coating in other areas to any large extent.

Many different types of materials have been used to mask steel during hot-dip galvanizing. Some products are more effective than others and the price range of the products varies substantially, depending on if the product was designed specifically for use during hot-dip galvanizing.

A few products specifically designed for masking during hot-dip galvanizing include:

- Stop Galv (Transtrade- 918-521-7271)
- Maskote Zinc Stop-Off (Pyrotek- 440-669-2930)
- Galva Stop (Puma Chemical- 800-211-7993)

Because the above products have been specially formulated for use during galvanizing, which sometimes required additional engineering of the products, they tend to be more expensive than other materials used to mask steel.

Other products that have worked well at masking steel during hot-dip galvanizing, but that were not designed specifically for this use, include:

- GE 100% Silicone Caulk (Home Depot, Lowe's)
- DAP Household Adhesive Sealant (Home Depot, Lowe's)
- NAPA RTV Red (NAPA Auto Parts)



Products not designed specifically for hot-dip galvanizing tend to be less expensive than products designed specifically for use during hot-dip galvanizing, but sometimes do not work as effectively; however, each of these products did perform well during testing conducted by American Galvanizers Association.

Regardless if the products used for masking steel were designed specifically for hot-dip galvanizing or not, it is important to always follow the manufacturers' recommendations and Material Safety Data Sheets.

Speaking of testing, the results of the AGA study on masking materials are now available. The information has been compiled into a white paper that discusses testing on a total of 15 different materials used for masking steel during galvanizing. The Galvanizing Note, *Masking Materials for Preventing Hot-Dip Galvanizing*, can be obtained on the AGA website, www.galvanizeit.org, or by contacting the AGA Technical Department at 720-554-0900 x21.

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