

# Handling Automotive Parts Containing Fiberglass Insulation

The fiberglass insulation found in automotive acoustical absorbers can become a skin irritant. Proactive steps have been taken in the design and manufacturing of parts to minimize this potential nuisance.

These include:

- Most parts are specified with a polyester fabric scrim layer on both exposed surfaces that can serve as a barrier from the fiberglass substrate.
- All trim edges are tightly compressed to minimize exposed surface area.
- Robotic water jet trimming is often utilized to cut, clean and rinse all edges.

**Once these finished parts have reached the assembly location, consider these work practices to minimize handling discomfort.**

- Wear long sleeves, loose fitting clothing and cotton gloves. Avoid wearing tight fitting rings, watches and bracelets that can trap and hold loose fibers.
- Wear a hat with a brim and safety glasses with side shields when working overhead with fiberglass parts.
- Mechanical irritation is caused by small glass fibers embedding into the skin. First rinse any exposed surface with cold water to remove loose fibers. Then wash the area with warm water to open pores and use mild soap to remove any embedded fibers. Skin lotions or creams can be used after washing for further relief.
- Wash work clothes separately to avoid the transfer of any loose fibers to other non work clothes. Rinse the washing machine after each load to prevent any fiber contamination of the next laundry load.
- Loose fibers that may have collected on work clothes can be transferred to exposed skin surfaces. Installers should avoid touching sensitive areas (eyes, nose, mouth, etc.) with gloves or shirt sleeves that may contain loose fibers.
- Keep the work area as clean as possible. Avoid overhead fans that can stir up any workplace dust. Break down and dispose of expendable containers in a location away from installation area.
- Minimize bending, flexing or any excessive handling of fiberglass parts during installation. Parts should be packaged and presented to the installer to minimize handling. Parts at the bottom of any container may collect shipping fall-out dust from the parts above. Additional care should be taken to minimize handling of these last parts in any carton.