

EXCEL TRIBOMETERS, LLC

Newsletter

February 9, 2010

As a significant stakeholder in the walkway safety community, EXCEL TRIBOMETERS, LLC, is dedicated to the advancement of the state of the art and knowledge of slip resistance metering as related to walkway safety, safety engineering, risk management, loss control, building and facilities design and construction, building ownership, building maintenance, walking surface materials performance and quality control, walkway surface coatings performance and quality control, footwear bottom materials and tread patterns performance and quality control, biomechanics, kinesiology, and other scientific interests.

In our first two months of ownership, we have focused on evaluating the current state of affairs in tribometry by re-evaluating our personal 30 years of safety engineering experience in walkway safety, by reviewing the English XL innovation and history with Bill English, and by putting our ears to the ground to hear what many knowledgeable, experienced users and researchers have to say. The result is surprising to us. We are concerned to learn of reported variability in results from the reputable tribometers, including the XL VIT. In response, we already conducted our own extensive research and testing to find causes and remedies.

The condition of the test foot is the only **significant variable** in the accuracy and reliability of testing results with the XL VIT, if your machine is in sound condition and in calibration, and if you use your slipmeter according to the XL VIT User Guide. Use extra care when you calibrate your test foot. Make sure your XL VIT is current with its calibration and refurbishing.

Even though the XL VIT has repeatedly proven its reliability and accuracy, and remains a standard in the slip meter industry, we address several **areas to improve your test results**:

1. The **condition of your sand paper** is critical to the proper preparation of your test foot. Sharp, *clean* 180 grit silicon carbide sandpaper is required to assure the test foot has a fresh surface free of the Neolite sanding dust that could bias your results low. Test feet that read high are usually either contaminated or oxidized. Contaminated test feet

require washing with dish soap and water, thorough rinsing with tap water, then drying with clean paper towel before 50 circles of sanding on clean sandpaper, followed by 5 circles on separate, sharp, clean 180 grit sandpaper. An oxidized Neolite surface also requires 50 circles of sanding on sharp, clean 180 grit sandpaper, followed by 5 circles on separate, sharp, clean 180 grit sandpaper. See the XL VIT User Guide

2. We sell **certified calibration tiles**. What does that mean? All tiles are not created equal. As an example, in a batch of 10 tiles we recently received directly from the TCNA, many did not test at 0.20 ± 0.02 wet when cross-tested against a certified calibration tile that is preserved at our location, using a slip meter and test foot prepared precisely according to the XL VIT User Guide. If you suspect your TCNA tile does not calibrate at 0.20 ± 0.02 wet, you may send it to us and we will provide a certified value for your tile for \$50.00. Otherwise, you may purchase a TCNA tile with a certified value from us for \$80.00.
3. To assure **consistency and competency**, we are launching a major effort to assure all XL VIT users follow the same the procedures, and use the same techniques. The newly created XL VIT User Guide is now posted on the [EXCEL TRIBOMETERS.com](http://EXCELTRIBOMETERS.com) web site, and a “how-to” video will be available soon. Tablets of preprinted testing results-recording forms are being produced, and results-reporting wording recommendations are being developed.
4. We are investigating **improved slipmeter component manufacturing** techniques and materials to upgrade the ruggedness and high quality of the XL VIT.

The **CXLT certification program** has the great benefit of clearly establishing competency in operation of the XL VIT. No matter which slip meter you use, everyone using it must be preparing the test foot and operating the machine the same, or the results will not be as reliable as they could

The EXCEL TRIBOMETERS, LLC, **CXLT class** will have a renewed focus and an expanded curriculum to establish a strong foundation in the scientific and mechanical aspects of the available slipmeters, the effects of reasonably foreseeable variables on the performance of slipmeters, and extensive hands-on instruction and demonstration in the proper use of the XL Variable Incidence Tribometer. When you leave, you will be a knowledgeable and proficient CXLT.

The **next CXLT class** by EXCEL TRIBOMETERS, LLC, will be June 6, 2010, at the Microtel Inn and Suites, at the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania airport.

Rooms have been reserved at \$79.99 for the night before. The hotel has a free shuttle from the terminals, and is within walking distance to the train into Center City Philadelphia. ASTM F13 meets June 7 and 8, in West Conshohocken. Space is limited to 20 classmates, so reserve early. We also provide **on-site CXL programs** for as many as your facility can accommodate. If you are one of the many organizations that have a large staff who are interested in tribometry and walkway safety, we will come to you.

Calibration and Refurbishing Service - Your XL VIT is a scientific instrument and requires regular refurbishing, as with any similar credible metering device. From now until October, 2010, for those of you who are not current and your slipmeter is more than 1 year overdue, we are offering an amnesty option of \$300 plus parts. Even if your slipmeter needs major repair, the charges will be limited to a maximum of the standard rate of \$200 plus the overdue surcharge of \$100 per year overdue, which may save our customers who have neglected to have their slipmeter refurbished for an extended period of time.

Please keep in mind that if you maintain your tribometer by sending it for service at the proper intervals, **we will repair anything** within 6 months following service, for shipping costs only, unless there is clear evidence of physical abuse or extraordinarily extensive use. Some machines are shared by many and used constantly. Those slipmeters need servicing more often.

Please contact us if you require **spare test feet**. Also, if you have a shoe bottom material that you would like to have us mount for you, we would appreciate that opportunity as well.

We **value your input** and questions, and look forward to hearing from you. You can contact Peter directly at 757-897-2853, and by email at pwidas@EXCELTRIBOMETERS.com.

George P. Widas, PE, CSP, CXL, President and CEO, on behalf of
Peter Widas, BSMSE, CXL, Vice President, Chief Operating Officer

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