

STRICTLY BUSINESS

BY JACK CLEARY, Financial Editor



Cleveland's Glidden Co. Is First To Develop Latex-Base Enamel

Nothing bounces like a rubber ball. Nothing, except possibly two rubber balls.

Rubber it was that gave a lively bounce to Glidden Co.'s paint sales when in 1948 the big Cleveland company was first by 18 months to come out with a synthetic latex-base paint for interior walls. Production and sales of the satin finish have been rising ever since.

Now, Glidden is preparing to put its second rubber ball into play. And this, another "first" in its industry.

Vice President A. D. Duncan, general manager of Glidden's paint and varnish division, reveals to this writer today that the company has perfected and will put on the market in the spring the first latex-base enamel ever produced commercially.

Latex-base paints are described by trade authorities as the biggest development in the history of the paint industry. They have provided a greater stimulus to sales than did introduction of varnish stains and high gloss enamels at the turn of the century or lacquer following World War I.

Latex-base interior wall paints, because of ease and speed of application have made home owners their own home decorators and have so stimulated interest in giving rooms a "new look" that sales have multiplied several-fold.

A direct result: It is estimated there are some 30 million amateur painters in the United States today, more than double the number who would attempt a home redecorating job only a decade ago.

This trend toward "do it yourself," instead of resulting in lessened demand for commercial painters, has actually stepped up the call for such service. That's because fresh appearance of a newly-decorated interior whets the homeowner's desire that the exterior of the house, for instance, be equally attractive. And most often that requires a professional painter.

Cost of professional interior decoration is not merely the price of the paint. Expense of preparation and application is several times that of the raw material.

That's the prime reasons why latex-base paints have been accorded such enthusiastic reception by the public. The rankst beginner can apply them without leaving tattle-tale brush marks; complete absence of fumes makes it possible to paint during winter with doors and windows closed; the paint dries so quickly that drapes and pictures may be hung within 20 minutes of painting.

On top of an all-time record last year, Vice President Duncan reports the total company sales of latex-base paints for the first nine months this year are 42 per cent ahead of the corresponding period of 1951.

That apparently was significantly responsible for Glidden's overall paint sales up to Oct. 15 this year showing an 8 per cent gain to a new high, in contrast to a 4.8 per cent decline for the paint industry as a whole up to Aug. 15 (latest figures available).

This showing was made in face of a decline in industrial paint sales this year of 10.1 per cent for Glidden and 11.5 per cent for the entire paint industry.

Reflecting ending of the steel industry strike and revival of activity in the furniture and appliance industries, however, Glidden's industrial paint sales for September shot 22½ per cent ahead of the like month of 1951, while for the first half of October are 14 per cent up.

Glidden's trade sales (consumer sales) through August this year show a 15½ per cent advantage over a year ago, compared with a decline of 0.5 per cent for the industry as a whole in that classification.

Glidden's newly developed latex enamel will be available in a full range of colors from deep tones to pale pastels. Its use, however, is expected to be limited to interior woodwork and bathroom and kitchen walls, a considerably smaller market than for the satin finish latex-base paint for living rooms, dining rooms, bed rooms, etc.

Nevertheless, Duncan sees the latex-base enamel contributing significantly to overall Glidden paint sales next year for which he has set up a target 10 per cent higher than this year.

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Glidden Plans Spring Sale of 1st Commercial Latex-Base Enamel

By a WALL STREET JOURNAL Staff Reporter

CLEVELAND—Glidden Co. has developed and will put on the market in the spring the first latex-base enamel ever produced commercially, A. D. Duncan, vice president of the paint and varnish division, announced.

The new product was unveiled as top Glidden executives from all over the country opened a three-day meeting here.

Mr. Duncan said the new latex-base enamel will be produced in a full range of shades from deep tones to pastels.

According to Mr. Duncan, the latex-base enamel is designed primarily for interior woodwork, bathroom and kitchen walls.

Predicting that Glidden's paint sales this year will top the record high in 1951, Mr. Duncan said the company's overall paint sales to October 15 this year were 8½ above the like period of 1951.

This showing, he said, was made despite a 1.8½ decrease in overall paint sales for the entire paint industry through August.

Mr. Duncan said sales of Spred Satin through October 15 were 42½ above the like period of last year.

Glidden's consumer product sales through August this year were 15.5½ above 1951, contrasted to a decline of ¼ per cent for the entire paint industry, he said.

September industrial paint sales, he added, were 22.5½ above the corresponding month of 1951 and for the first half of October were 14½ above October, 1951.