Extra SPARKLE
SILVET® / SILVEX®
For Plastics
The Extra SPARKLE SILVET® (EST) and Extra SPARKLE SILVEX® (ESX) grades were developed to provide aluminum pigments with the potential for creating alluring and novel aesthetics in plastics. This is accomplished by changing the shape of the aluminum pigment from the traditional 2-dimensional “flake” geometry to a 3-dimensional “sphere”.

This new geometry reflects light differently than conventional flake pigments. Traditional aluminum grades have relatively flat surfaces and high surface areas. When aligned parallel to the substrate or polymer surface, they reflect light in a highly angular manner. As a result, the metallic appearance changes noticeably as the viewing angle changes.

Compared to flake pigments, light reflected from spherical aluminum pigments is much less affected by the viewing angle. This minimizes the “flop” effect normally seen with traditional aluminum pigments, and maintains a more uniform color as the viewing angle changes. Since the surface area of a sphere is different than a traditional flake of a comparable particle size, more of the polymer matrix is visible because a greater amount of light is reflected from it than from the metallic pigment. This forms the basis for the visual effects obtainable when using EST and ESX grades.

To maximize the aesthetic value of plastic pigmented with EST and ESX grades, transparent plastics, pigments and dyes are recommended. When EST and ESX grades are used in combination with transparent resins and colorants, a shimmering, 3-dimensional pinpoint sparkle is produced. This effect is generated because light is reflected not only from pigment particles near the surface but also from those lying deeper within the polymer. The overall aesthetics are greatly enhanced when viewed under a bright light source or direct sunlight.

When formulating with EST and ESX grades, it is important to remember the differences between spherical and flake pigments. The low opacity of spherical pigments means that variations in the concentration of metallic pigment or colorant can result in noticeable changes to the aesthetics of the finished part. Therefore, care must be taken to ensure dispersion and loading of the colorant and metallic pigment concentration are tightly controlled. In addition, care must be taken during polymer processing to keep from damaging the spherical pigment particles. As with all aluminum pigments, excess shear may alter the shape of the EST and ESX pigment particles, resulting in noticeable changes in appearance.
Extra SPARKLE SILVET®/SILVEX® Series

United States and Canada:
Tel: 1-800-348-4824
order@silberline.com

International Orders:
Tel: 570-668-6050
intorder@silberline.com

For All General Inquiries / Correspondence, and Samples:
Tel: 1-570-668-6050
Fax: 1-570-668-2621
samples@silberline.com

Technical Service Department:
Tel: 1-877-492-7881
Fax: 1-570-668-4227
technology@silberline.com

www.silberline.com
World Headquarters:
130 Lincoln Drive, PO Box B
Tamaqua, PA 18252-0420

Facilities in Brazil, China, Germany, India, Mexico, Scotland, Singapore and the United States
Extra SPARKLE SILVET®/SILVEX® Series

Contact Us:

Silberline Global
Headquarters
130 Lincoln Drive
PO Box B
Tamaqua, PA 18252
Phone: 570-668-6050
Toll-Free (USA & Canada): 800-348-4824
Fax: 570-668-0197
E-Mail: order@silberline.com

Silberline Brasil Limitada
Rua Dr. Tirso Martins, 100, Cj. 701
Vila Mariana
Sao Paulo – Cep. 04120-050
Brazil
Phone: 55-11-3562-2780
Fax: 55-11-3562-2783

Silberline Pigmentos, SRL de CV
Blvd. Atlixcayotl
Torre Bosques II #5320-200
Reserva Territorial Atlixcayotl
San Andres Cholula
Puebla – CP 72810
Mexico
Phone: 52-222-2252774

Silberline Pigment (Suzhou) Company Limited
Suchun Industrial Area
428 Xinglong Street, Unit 26B
Suzhou, China 215126
Phone: 86-512-67333150
Fax: 86-512-62723540

Silberline Specialty Effect Pigments India Private Limited
Plot No. 248
Jawahar Co-Op Industrial Estate
Kamothe, Panvel - 410 209
Dist: Raigad
Maharashtra, India
Phone: 91-99-2076-7723

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