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CONTRIBUTION OF SODIUM BISULPHITE OR META BISULPHITE TO THE RAW RUBBER INDUSTRY

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Discolouration of latex can be due to various causes. This discolouration has serious disadvantages in latex crepe manufacture, where the white colour is of paramount importance. In the manufacture of RSS too, if the discolouration takes place to a significant extent, the sheets are down graded. In order to prevent enzymatic discolouration, sodium bisulphite or meta bisulphite is used widely in the raw rubber industry. In the crepe rubber industry the amount of sodium meta bisulphite used is 500 g per 100 kg of dry rubber. In the case of sheet rubber manufacture 7 to 8 g of the chemical is added into latex containing 500 g of dry rubber in the form of a freshly prepared solution to prevent discolouration caused by enzymes during overnight coagulation. This also helps to control pin head bubble formation during slow drying of sheets.

However, it should be noted that the addition of sodium bisulphite or metasulphite to latex should be done under controlled conditions and under no circumstances should excess of this chemical be added, as excess causes drying difficulties. If the coagulation of the latex is done quickly within 3 to 4 hours and drying is done in a perfect smoke house, contribution from this chemical to sheet rubber is nil.