PCB Cleaning Process Bath Life – when In Doubt, Dump It Out
Session Questions and Answers

Q: What is the normal turnaround time for a bath analysis report from the lab?

A: Historically, we are going to see a 2-week turnaround time on that. It depends on what the load is and if you're in a situation where you need it faster; have that conversation with your Regional Sales Manager. Sometimes we can maneuver it but schedule two weeks for that.

Q: How does one determine the surface tension of their boards?

A: There is something called a dyne pen that can be purchased anywhere. Utilize this pen to determine what the surface energy is.

Q: Drag out was mentioned as a factor. Could this be explained further?

A: Drag out is any time the chemistry is being moved when its not still in the wash process. So whether its something that in a batch machine or sitting inside a component or inline or boards too close together and the chemistry doesn't have a place to fall back down into the chemistry tank and it starts to go into the rinse tank, we want to make sure we are controlling and containing as much as the chemistry as possible for reuse and not letting it go into other portions of the cycle.

Q: If its determined that I need to change out my chemistry, can I send it to drain?

A: That is something that has got to be evaluated on a local basis. There are some areas in the country where you are able to drain and others do not. I would look with your Safety and Hazard team to determine what those regulations are.

Q: What is the best time to start an evaluation of your chemistry? Is it better to start when the chemistry is brand new after being changed or during the life of the chemistry?

A: Either one is good. If you're doing it in the beginning with a virgin sample, it allows us to know how much your loading. If its already in the process, we can still figure out that information going forward. We just want to do it before we have problems because as we mentioned, we want to collect samples over this amount of time and we want to send it to the lab to get the best information possible. If we are already having problems, we are a little further behind, so getting in front of this allows us to provide a really good path for your organization to have the chemistry doing its optimal job.