

# 3M *Holding Fast*

High Performance Acrylic Foam Tapes for the Automotive Aftermarket

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## Innovative Tape Application Saves Labor Costs

“An important benefit of this new tape application is the substantial savings in installation time,” said Larry Chaffers, director of marketing at Trim-Lok/Rubber Trim Products (RTP), Inc. “Saved labor time means saved dollars.”

This new application involves using 3M™ Acrylic Foam Tape to attach rubber weatherstrip to large signs that are bolted onto taxi roofs. The weatherstrip was previously attached using staples, a labor-intensive process often providing unsatisfactory results.

Trim-Lok/RTP is a California-based manufacturer of flexible vinyl trim and rubber extrusions sold to RV, automotive and marine OEMs worldwide. Trim-Lok/RTP developed this taped weatherstrip application in response to its customer’s request for a better taxi sign sealing technique.

“We were shopping around for a wider extrusion and a cleaner installation method for weatherstrip. We contacted four companies for their suggestions and found that Trim-Lok/RTP had the best solution to our problem,” said



3M™ Acrylic Foam Tape is used for permanent attachment of flexible rubber weatherstrip to molded plastic taxi signs.

Don Welshans, textile manufacturing director for Taxi Tops, Inc. This Las Vegas, Nevada, company has been in business since 1995 and manufactures made-to-order taxi signs.



Weatherstrip attached with 3M™ Acrylic Foam Tape adjusts better to gaps in the ribbed cab roof, resulting in a clean, attractive look.

Trim-Lok/RTP proposed that Taxi Tops apply 3M tape along the edge of the now-wider weatherstrip for secure, permanent attachment to the molded plastic sign.

According to Welshans, tape used for this application provides a water- and air-tight seal, eliminating the whistling sound commonly heard when a taxi sign with a staple-attached weatherstrip travels over 50 mph.

“Taped weatherstrip provides a uniform, aesthetically attractive look by allowing the rubber flap to better adjust to irregularities of various taxi roof contours,” said Welshans.

Taxi Top’s previous fastening method required 200 to 250 staples per unit to attach the rubber to the sign, and it was

a two-person job. "A tape-attached weatherstrip can be installed in one-third less time and by one person," Welshans explained.

Taxi Tops conducted field tests of the new 3M tape-applied weatherstrip. "Using 3M™ Acrylic Foam Tape, we mounted weatherstrip to our signs, then bolted them to the roofs of taxis," explained Welshans. "We took the taxis out on the road, and one of them was involved in a roll-over accident. We were amazed to discover that the tape-adhered weatherstrip remained intact."

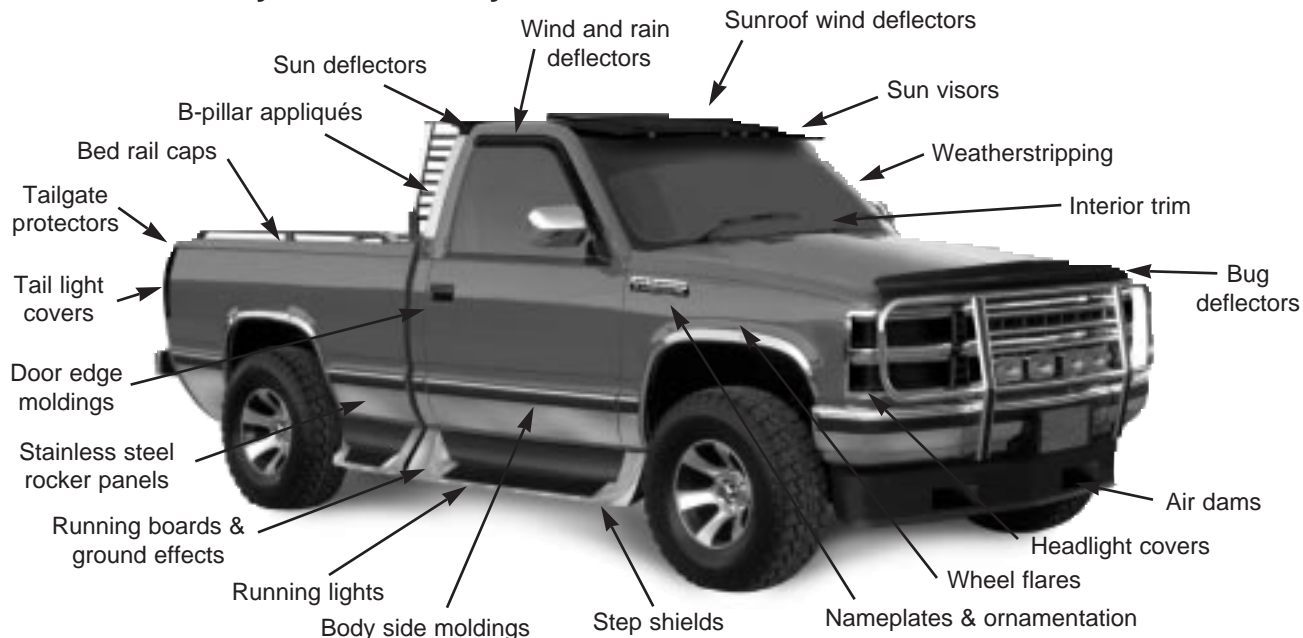
Trim-Lok/RTP has also conducted rigorous testing of 3M acrylic foam tape, along with various other attachment tapes. The Trim-Lok/RTP tests involve using accelerated heat aging in a controlled environment. After testing, each taped sample is analyzed for any adhesive failure or compromise.

"We've tested just about every automotive grade adhesive on the market, including six of 3M's top competitors," explained Chaffers. "3M acrylic foam tape is the only product that successfully passes our performance tests."



**3M™ Acrylic Foam Tape provides a tight seal against moisture and air, eliminating the whistling sound common with staple-mounted weatherstrip.**

### Trim and Accessory Attachment Systems



**A multitude of trim and accessories can be attached with 3M™ Acrylic Foam Tape, which demonstrates superior adhesion over conventional foam tapes on a variety of paints.**



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