

News Release

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Circuits, LLC Adds Plasma Etch to Processes

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MURRYSVILLE, PA, November 12, 2009 - Circuits, LLC announced the addition of in-house plasma etching to their already impressive facilities list. Always looking for ways to improve their processes and the overall quality of the finished board, the plasma etch operation will be used for smear removal and etchback of flexible pc boards in a much cleaner, more economical and efficient way. The objective of desmear is to remove the bonded resin deposits left in a mechanically drilled hole and to micro-roughen the topography. This insures a higher quality plated through hole. Plasma is produced by metering a combination of highly reactive and conductive ionized gases into a heated vacuum chamber between electrodes energized by an RF generator. Circuits chose a 16 chamber, 5 gas machine offering a wide variety of processing options ranging from the mildest gold cleaning cycle to the most aggressive polyimide etching cycle.

Many PCB manufacturers today are still using a permanganate desmear process, whereas plasma etch not only eliminates an expensive wet line process, but also reduces water usage, treatment costs and chemical disposal. The US Environmental Protection Agency under the Design for the Environment Program conducted a case study comparing the plasma process to the permanganate desmear process and the results were dramatic. The permanganate desmear process accounted for 13% of the overall annual environmental management costs due to treatment and disposal costs for the process baths and rinses.

“At Circuits minimizing the environmental impact of our manufacturing process is always at the forefront of our mind and adding the Plasma etch line just made sense, it’s a much cleaner and reliable process that results in a greener environment and a better quality finished product at a lower cost to our customer, not many processes can make that claim these days.” according to Brian Kaboly, Sr. Process Engineer.

Circuits, LLC is committed to taking a leadership position in the advancement of safer, cleaner products.

About Circuits, LLC

Circuits, LLC is a quality-driven, customer-focused manufacturer of highly reliable built-to-spec flexible printed circuit boards serving the defense, industrial, and medical markets with consistent quality and on-time delivery unsurpassed by competitors.

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