



## Reproducing or Repairing of Factory Sound Deadener and Spray-on Sealer

**Approx Time Needed For Completion:** Depends on the amount of surface and condition

**Supplies/Equipment Needed:**

- Assorted rags for clean up
- Paint sticks and putty knife for applying and spreading
- Paint brushes 1" -4"
- Mixing bucket
- One gallon of Spectrum Sludge and activator (amount depends on the size of the task)
- Spray can or appropriate spray gun with paintable sound dead or undercoating (3M or Wurth)

Years ago there were many good choices when it came to products for reproducing the original look and consistency of factory sound deadener and seam sealer (the sprayed on uses). Recently, choices have become limited as most products are difficult to build up as each coat dissolves the earlier ones. So many show cars have only a light coat of spray sound deadener, not very reflective of what originally was there. During a recent restoration the shop ran across a product made for other purposes that showed promise. We purchase some and started playing with it to see if it would fit our needs.

The product is a two part water based goo (once mixed it has a consistency of peanut butter) that we could built up to more than 1/4" in thickness, dries to a fairly hard surface, but appears to remain somewhat flexible. We quickly discovered that as usual, you need both a good product and the proper technique to produce the desired outcome. This took a while, but once we had it down we could produce the irregular surface of the original

sprayed-on product and could even get it to sag in the "curtains" reminiscent of what we often find in the rear wheel wells of many Mustangs and Shelby's.

NOTE: We have not tested this to see how well it holds up on a daily driven or even an occasionally driven car as of yet but since it's a product and a hardener there is no indication that it should not hold up as well or better than the original products. Also not all plants and years used spray on seam sealer in the interior, trunk or front wheel well seams. There are other products and techniques for those applications.

## Foreword



Before I go further I guess I should mention the product by name. It's referred to as "Sludge" and is produced by Spectrum.

Doing a 69 Dearborn car we found the product useful in areas where the seams were originally sprayed – producing the look of waves, splatters and heavy applications approx 4-6" wide. These seams (on this project) included the seams found in the trunk area, interior seams, and front wheel well, at the firewall, seams.

We also used it where the factory applied spray sound deadener, in the rear wheel wells where, originally, it was typical to find heavy applications of sound deadener and overspray onto the rear frame rails while thinning at the upper surfaces of the wheel tub. We found another excellent application was reproducing or repairing the pattern of sound deadener that was applied to the inside surface of the rear quarter panels in the trunk interior.

## Step #1

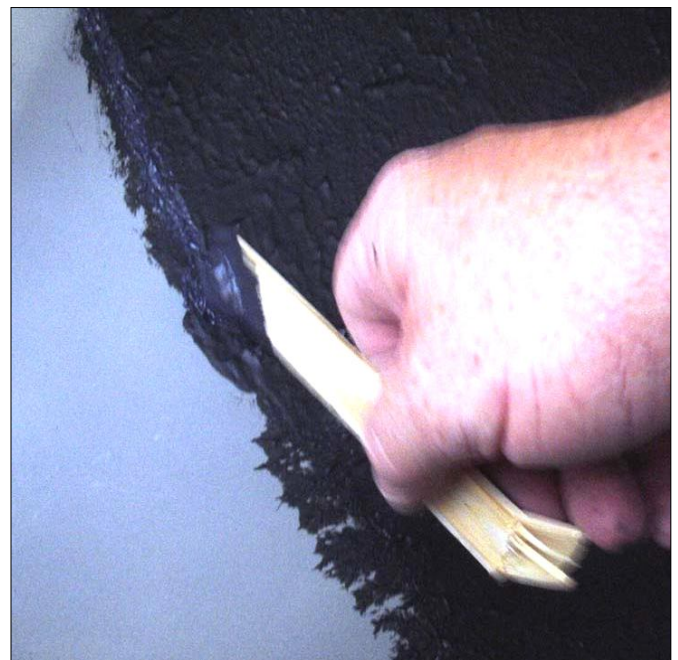
Once mixed the first step is to apply the Sludge to the panel. Of course you should consider what your final look will be. "Extra heavy there, a little thinner there?" "If it's thick to the edge of the wheel well, then I'll need some "overspray" on the frame rail below and behind that point." Basically lay out a plan in your mind before you start. Not that you cannot adjust if need be, but go at it with a plan.

The plan should be formed after researching what workers did at that car's particular plant at that time and date. Examining original cars can tell you how many passes they took with the application wand and even where they stopped and started

each pass. All important if you're going to make this look right.

While I think of it, I should offer that too much of the product should not be mixed at one time. It normally has a pretty decent pot life but you can add additional product if you run out and it's not fun to have a hardened lump in your mixing bucket. NOTE: The Sludge mixes up and takes on a deep purple color which changes into a dark gray/black when dry.

The makers of the produce suggest that it can be sprayed. Figured that was going to be a mess and not provide me with the control I wanted, so I relied on a more basic technique, slap it



on anyway I could find. After a while I found that a combination of paint stick and trowel would allow me to get the

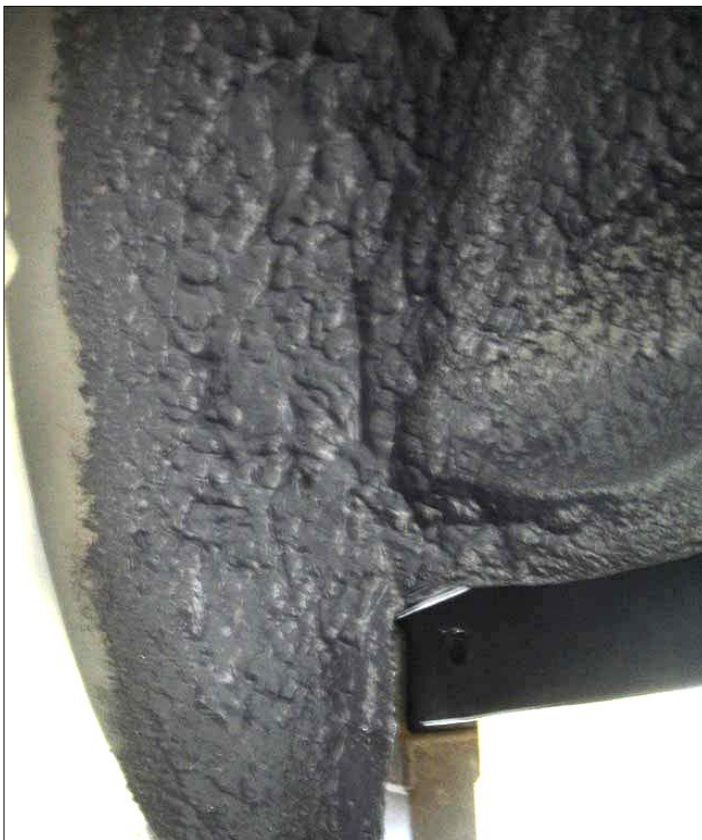
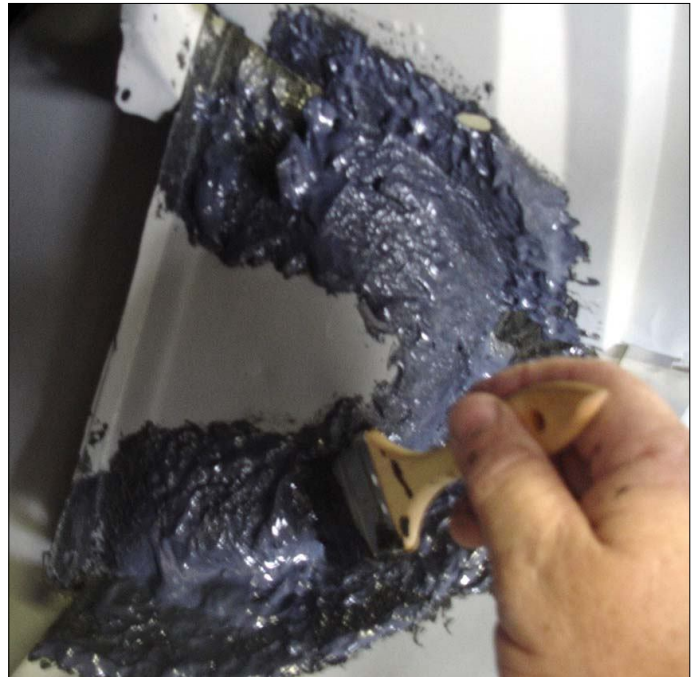
Sludge out of the bucket, on to the panel and get the thickness I was looking for.

## Step #2

So the material has been applied to the surfaces as planned. Next a texture must be produced in the surface to reproduce the sprayed on look. Originally the look of small peaks that fall over into the product is somewhat similar to butter cream frosting on a cake.

I found that by using a brush dipped into the surface, then removed straight up, then towards my next dipping point (every  $\frac{1}{4}$ " or less) I could produce the look similar to the original. I did this over and over again in the direction that I wanted to reproduce the

direction of travel the worker would have made with the spray wand. This is going to take some time.



## Step #3

Once dry, areas can be repaired, expanded, or corrected as you see fit. Since the edges are rough and very unlike a sprayed on product, the final application, once dry, must be over coated with a good spray on sound deadener or undercoating that will dry to a firm surface and is paintable when dry.

Many will have 3M or Wurth products left from prior attempts at reproducing the original sealers, these will serve our purpose well. Simply spray over the complete surface of the Sludge application, extending the edges and continuing the overspray to the logical destinations.



## Step #4

After all is dry the surfaces are ready to be over coated with primers, body color and/or black out spray, depending on year and plant practices you are imitating.

Like original – only a little cleaner. Just needs a coat of exterior color.



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## *Samples of original rear wheel wells for comparison*

