

DSS-R.01.05 | Residue / Film / Adhesion

Adhesive Label / Sticker Ghost

Residue/film - pressure-sensitive adhesive (PSA) imprint after label removal; lens-shaped halo, wipe-edge overlaps; typically SC-0 on clean substrate

Diagnosis summary

Adhesive label/sticker ghost is an appearance change on glass caused by pressure-sensitive adhesive (PSA) remnants or plasticizer transfer that remain after label/tape/film removal. It presents as a lens-shaped halo or rectilinear patch at the former label footprint, often with wipe-edge overlaps from attempted cleanups. Classification is appearance-only per VIS (method-agnostic).

Field identification cues

- Surface-catch class (MSRT)
- Expect SC-0 on the clean glass substrate once true PSA residue is lifted (non-etch).
- If a strong remover or heat was used excessively, a very slight SC-1 may be observed (converted film or shallow texture) within the footprint.
- Perform one light, non-marring pass on a small revealed test patch (substrate), not over gummy islands. Use polymer stylus if a functional coating is suspected. MSRT supports classification only.

Classification, severity and scope

- Assign CAT by visibility impact at acceptance geometry and MSRT on a small revealed test patch. Depth values are indicative-field measurement not required.
- CAT-1 (Benign / non-relief): Optical ghost only; substrate SC-0 after true lift; visible mainly at angle/raking. Indicative relief: 0-10 µm (optical).
- CAT-2 (Light): Persistent thin film within footprint with slight SC-1 (aged/converted PSA or over-treated with hot/strong remover); limited impact at standard view. Indicative relief: ~10-40 µm.
- CAT-3 (Moderate): Broad, high-contrast footprint with dirty tide line and SC-1→SC-2 at interior (uncommon; suggests chemical interaction beyond simple PSA). Indicative relief: ~40-120 µm.
- Reclassify when: After true residue removal, any modeled micro-texture or SC-class > 0 remains on substrate → evaluate under Ch.04.02 Adhesive remover staining or Ch.04.03 Degreaser/alkaline burn as.

Distinguishing criteria

- vs. Protective film adhesive residue (R.01.06): Film residues often cover larger areas with edge-peel scallops; label ghosts are small, discrete, and match common label dies.
- vs.
- vs. Mineral staining (Ch.03.02): Mineral veils align to spray/runs and are non-tacky; label ghosts track label shape and installation height/pattern.

Documentation and inspection

- Photo set (VIS): 12 / 36 / 72 in, normal + oblique; include raking macros of the footprint interior and edge/overlap lines; add context frames (label fragments, remover).
- MSRT result (substrate only): After lifting a small test patch without abrasion, perform one light, non-marring pass on the clean substrate; record SC-class (expect SC-0).
- Forms: Pane ID; product family & surface numbering; worked surface Y/N; functional coating present on worked surface?

Safety / repairability boundary: Complete only the non-invasive reveal and inspection steps authorized by the controlling VIS guidance. Classification does not authorize restoration, establish acceptance, or override stop-work, coating, crack, integrity, access, chemical, fall-protection, or project-specific requirements.

Full DSS publication: use the catalog download. Web specification:

<https://a7df714357.nxcli.io/learning-center/resource-center/damage-specification-standards/dss-r-01-05-adhesive-label-sticker-ghost/>