

Transportation Safety Division

# 3M™ Diamond Grade™ Conspicuity Markings Series 983 for Emergency Vehicles

Product Bulletin Series 983 for Emergency Vehicles  
April 2018

Replaces Product Bulletin 983 for Use on Emergency Vehicles Dated June 2016

## 1 Description

3M Diamond Grade Conspicuity Markings Series 983 for Emergency Vehicles are highly retroreflective microprismatic markings designed to enhance the visibilities of the sides and rears of emergency vehicles. These reflective markings consist of prismatic lenses that are formed in a transparent, synthetic resin, and sealed and backed with a pressure sensitive adhesive and clear polymeric liner. Diamond Grade Conspicuity Markings are highly durable, providing up to ten years of field performance. 3M Series 983 markings have excellent angularity which provides enhanced visibility for drivers.

- Combined fluorescence and retroreflection provides 24-hour visibility and detection.
- Fluorescence enhances visibility.

Series 983 for Emergency Vehicles meets or exceeds NFPA 1901 regulations.

For details of the features and benefits of Series 983 sheeting, please refer to the 3M Transportation Safety Division website (<http://www.3M.com/roadsafety/>).

Conspicuity Markings Series 983 for Emergency Vehicles is available in the following colors.

**Table 1. Product Codes by Color**

| Color                    | Product Code |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| White                    | 983-10       |
| Yellow                   | 983-71       |
| Red                      | 983-72       |
| Fluorescent Yellow       | 983-21       |
| Fluorescent Yellow-Green | 983-23       |

## 1.1 Easy to Apply

- Aggressive pressure sensitive adhesive
- Easy to remove liner
- Available in rolls, packaged pieces, or kiss-cut pieces on a roll. Please refer to the 3M Transportation Safety Division Pricing Catalog for the standard product offering.

## 1.2 Durable

- Pre-sealed edges
- Non-metallic construction
- 10-year warranty for 983-10, 983-71, 983-72, and 983-21
- 7-year warranty for 983-23

## 2 Typical Physical Properties

Table 2 presents typical physical property data for Series 983 for Emergency Vehicles. The information presented in Table 2 should be considered typical only, and not be used for specification purposes.

**Table 2. Typical Physical Properties**

| Property  | Series 983 for Emergency Vehicles Typical Values   |
|---|--|
| Thickness (Caliper)   | 0.014 inch - 0.018 inch  |
| Whiteness Daytime Luminance Limit<br>YT ASTM E1164              | 45 White<br>5 Red<br>27 Yellow<br>75 Fluorescent Yellow<br>90 Fluorescent Yellow-Green   |
| Gloss ASTM D523 at 85°  | 100  |
| Shrinkage ASTM D4956  | No substantial change  |
| Flexibility - wrap around 0.125 inch<br>mandrel at 32° F (0° C) | No cracking  |
| High pressure wash test - 45° angle,<br>1200 psi, 8 inch away   | Passes   |
| Adhesion - 90° Hanging Weight ASTM<br>D4956                     | 0.2 inch (4 mm)  |
| Minimum Application Temp.                                       | 50° F (10° C)  |
| Instron Peel Adhesion 12 inch/minute,<br>90° pullback           | Degreased aluminum 5.3 lb/in (.95 kg/cm)<br>Prepainted panel 3.0 lb/in (0.55 kg/cm)<br>Stainless steel 6.0 lb/in (1.1 kg/cm)<br>FRP 2.5 lb/in (0.52 kg/cm)<br>Tedlar® 3.0 lb/in (0.54 kg/cm)<br>Aluminum Rail 3.5 lb/in (0.56 kg/cm) |
| Chemical Resistance SAE J1967                                   | Not affected by toluene, #2 diesel fuel, gasoline (leaded)<br>kerosene, TSP detergent, xylene, dilute metal brighteners  |
| Corrosion Resistance ASTM B117 Salt<br>Spray                    | No effect - 1000 Hours   |
| Room Temperature Impact Resistance<br>100 in-lb, 5/8 inch tip   | No damage outside impact   |
| Cold Temperature Impact Resistance<br>60 in-lb at -20° F        | No damage outside impact   |

### 3 Coefficient of Retroreflection, $R_A$

The values in Table 3 are typical coefficients of retroreflection, expressed in candelas per lux per square meter ( $\text{cd}/\text{lux}/\text{m}^2$ ). Conformance to coefficient of retroreflection requirements shall be determined instrumentally, in accordance with ASTM E810 “Test Method of Coefficient of Retroreflection of Retroreflective Sheeting.” Per ASTM E810,  $R_A$  values obtained at  $0^\circ$  and  $90^\circ$  rotations were averaged to determine the  $R_A$  values presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Typical Coefficient of Retroreflection ( $R_A$ ) Values for New Sheeting ( $\text{cd}/\text{lux}/\text{m}^2$ )**

| Observation Angle <sup>a</sup> | Entrance Angle <sup>b</sup> | Typical $R_A$ for White 983 | Typical $R_A$ for Red 983 (NFPA 1901) | Typical $R_A$ for Yellow 983 (NFPA 1901) | Typical $R_A$ for Fl. Yellow 983 | Typical $R_A$ for Fl. Yellow-Green 983 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--|
| 0.2°                           | -4°                         | 800                         | 160 (14)                              | 645 (50)                                 | 400                              | 700                                    |
|                                | 30°                         | 430                         | 110 (6)                               | 420 (22)                                 | 220                              | 430                                    |
|                                | 45°                         | 175                         | 45 (N/A)                              | 235 (N/A)                                | 120                              | 160                                    |
| 0.5°                           | -4°                         | 460                         | 95 (7.5)                              | 360 (25)                                 | 150                              | 385                                    |
|                                | 30°                         | 215                         | 40 (3)                                | 180 (13)                                 | 75                               | 180                                    |
|                                | 45°                         | 55                          | 15 (N/A)                              | 65 (N/A)                                 | 40                               | 30                                     |

a. Observation Angle - the angle between the illumination axis and the observation axis.

b. Entrance Angle - the angle between the illumination axis and the retroreflector axis. The retroreflector axis is an axis perpendicular to the retroreflective surface.

### 4 Typical Physical Characteristics

Table 4 describes the typical physical characteristics of Series 983 for Emergency Vehicles. The information in Table 4 should be considered typical only, and not be used for specification purposes.

**Table 4. Typical Physical Characteristics**

| Property  | Description   |
|---|---|
| Adhesive color and type   | Clear, pressure sensitive   |
| Liner   | Translucent polymeric   |
| Application surfaces  | Painted or unpainted flat metal without rivets  |
| Heat resistance   | Maintains 70% of original coefficient of retroreflection at ( $\alpha=0.2$ , $\beta=-4$ ) after 24 hr. exposure to 170° F (77° C) air |
| Recommended minimum application temperature (ambient and substrate) | 50° F (10° C)   |
| Performance range   | -30° F to 200° F (-34° C to +94° C)   |

### 5 Photometrics

#### 5.1 Fluorescence

Fluorescent materials absorb short wavelength, invisible, incident radiation (solar energy) and re-emit it as longer wavelength, visible light. This re-emission of visible light continues as long as exciting incident radiation is present. This means fluorescent materials are especially effective during dawn, dusk, and overcast days. Fluorescence adds to the daytime luminances (apparent brightnesses) of markings and enhances the visibilities of emergency vehicles and other vehicles.

## 5.2 Color Test for Fluorescent Sheetings

Conformance to standard chromaticity ( $x, y$ ) and luminance factor ( $Y$ ) requirements shall be determined instrumentally, in accordance with ASTM E991, on sheeting applied to smooth aluminum test panels cut from alloy 6061-T6 or 5052-H38. Chromaticity values shall be determined on a HunterLab ColorFlex 45/0 spectrophotometer. Calculations shall be performed using CIE Illuminant D65 and the 2° standard observer.

Fluorescence luminance factors ( $Y_F$ ) differentiate fluorescent markings from ordinary (nonfluorescent) markings. The additional daytime luminance provided by fluorescence is directly related to the increased conspicuity of fluorescent vehicle markings under the varying daylight illumination conditions encountered in outdoor safety marking applications. A marking's fluorescence luminance factor,  $Y_F$ , provides a standardized measure of the marking's fluorescence.

A marking's numerical  $Y_F$  value serves, under specified illumination and viewing conditions, to: 1) verify the fluorescence of the marking (for nonfluorescent markings  $Y_F=0$ ) and 2) quantify the fluorescent efficiency of the marking. The magnitude of a marking's  $Y_F$  can be used to assess whether the fluorescence of the marking is sufficient for it to provide high daytime visibility performance under less than ideal conditions. Typical  $Y_F$  values for 983-21, fluorescent yellow, and 983-23, fluorescent yellow-green, are provided in Table 5.

**Table 5. Typical Luminance Factor Values for 3M Diamond Grade 983-21 Fluorescent Yellow and 983-23 Fluorescent Yellow-Green Conspicuity Markings<sup>a</sup>**

| Color                    | Total Luminance Factor ( $Y_T$ ) | Luminance Factor ( $Y_F$ ) | Luminance Factor ( $Y_R$ ) |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Fluorescent Yellow       | 75                               | 55                         | 20                         |
| Fluorescent Yellow-Green | 90                               | 55                         | 35                         |

a. Total luminance is defined as the sum of fluorescent and reflected luminance ( $Y_T=Y_F+Y_R$ ) and is determined in accordance with ASTM E2152 and ASTM E2153.

## 6 Maintenance

### 6.1 Cleaning

Routine cleaning is recommended for maximum performance. The following cleaning methods are recommended:

- Clean with sponge, cloth, or soft brush using water and detergent
- Automatic truck/car wash or standard high-pressure hand spray under following conditions:
  - Maximum pressure: 1200 PSI/80 bar
  - Maximum water/wash solution temperature: 140° F (60° C)
  - Minimum of 12 inches (30 cm) between cleaning jet(s) and marking
  - Cleaning wand or jets at angle of no more than 45 degrees from perpendicular to the marking surface
  - Use spray tip #1505 (15 degree spray angle, 05 capacity size)
- When using metal brighteners, follow manufacturer's recommendations for dilution. Thoroughly rinse brightener from markings after soaking vehicle

### 6.2 Storage

Series 983 for Emergency Vehicles markings should be stored in a cool, dry area, out of direct sunlight, at a temperature of 65-75° F (18-24° C) and a relative humidity of 30-50%. Rolls should be stored horizontally in their shipping cartons or original packaging.

### 6.3 Shelf Life

Apply Series 983 for Emergency Vehicles markings within two years of date of manufacture.

## 7 Durability

Series 983 for Emergency Vehicles will provide maximum durability when:

- All 3M recommended procedures are followed and
- Markings are applied to vertical surfaces (within  $\pm 20^\circ$  of vertical orientation).

Series 983 marking durability depends on use. Failure to follow 3M-required techniques may reduce durability. Below are some conditions and processing examples that may lead to reduced durability:

- Failure to cut markings around rivets, seams, and body panels
- Improper use of high pressure cleaning
- Contact with non-recommended chemicals or solvents
- Improper application or surface preparation
- Horizontal exposure
- Open cells along the edges of a marking may collect dirt, which will not reduce marking performance
- Damage due to external conditions may reduce adhesion and reflectivity near the damaged area

## 8 Health and Safety Information

Read all health hazard, precautionary, and first aid statements found in the Safety Data Sheet (SDS), Article Information Sheet, and/or product labels of chemicals prior to handling or use. Consult local regulations and authorities for possible restrictions. Visit us at [www.3M.com/us](http://www.3M.com/us) and select SDS search to obtain current Safety Data Sheets.

## 9 Warranty Information

### 9.1 3M Basic Product Warranty

3M Diamond Grade Conspicuity Marking Series 983 for Emergency Vehicles (“Product”) is warranted (“Basic Warranty”) to be free of defects in materials and manufacture at the time of shipment and to meet the specifications stated in this product bulletin. If the Product is proven not to have met the Basic Warranty on its shipment date, then a buyer’s exclusive remedy, and 3M’s sole obligation, at 3M’s option, will be a refund or replacement of the Product.

### 9.2 Additional Warranty

- 3M warrants (“3M Warranty”) that 3M Diamond Grade Conspicuity Markings 983-71, 983-72, and 983-21 sold by 3M to be used for conspicuity markings on Emergency Vehicles in the United States and Canada will remain visible by resisting excessive fading, cracking, peeling, lifting or discoloration for ten (10) years (seven (7) years for 983-23) (“Warranty Period”) from the date of original installation (“Installation Date”).

### 9.3 Terms and Conditions

- Product must be processed and applied to a vertically-mounted ( $\pm 20^\circ$ ) 3M recommended substrate as described in this product bulletin and in accordance with all 3M application, fabrication, and cleaning procedures provided in 3M's product bulletins, information folders (including but not limited to [3M Information Folder 4.9](#)), and applicable technical memos (which will be furnished to the manufacturer upon request).
- Any third-party imaging or altering of the Product not endorsed by 3M will void the 3M Warranty.
- A Product's failure to meet the 3M Warranty must be solely the result of design or manufacturing defects in the Product and not of (a) outside causes including improper storage, fabrication, handling, maintenance, or installation; (b) use of process colors, thinners, coatings, or other chemicals not recommended by 3M; (c) use of application procedures not recommended by 3M; (d) exposure to chemicals or solvents not recommended by 3M; (e) abrasion and other physical damage; (f) snow or any other burial of the marking; (g) collisions, vandalism, or malicious mischief; or (h) an act of God.
- 3M reserves the right to determine the method of replacement. Replacement product will carry the unexpired warranty of the Product it replaces.
- Claims made under this warranty will be honored only if 3M is presented with a traceable record of the Product's Installation Date, 3M is notified of a potential failure within thirty days of discovery, reasonable information requested by 3M is provided, and 3M is permitted to verify the cause of the failure.

## 9.4 Exclusive Limited Remedy and Disclaimer

If the Product is proven not to have met the 3M Warranty during the Warranty Period, then the purchaser's and user's exclusive remedy, and 3M's sole obligation, at 3M's option, shall be that 3M will provide replacement of the Product.

THE 3M WARRANTY IS MADE IN LIEU OF ALL OTHER WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO ANY IMPLIED WARRANTY OR CONDITION OF MERCHANTABILITY, OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, OR ANY IMPLIED WARRANTY ARISING OUT OF A COURSE OF DEALING OR OF PERFORMANCE, CUSTOM, OR USAGE OF TRADE.

## 9.5 Limitation of Liability

Except for the limited remedy stated above, and except where prohibited by law, 3M will not be liable for any loss or damage arising from any 3M product, whether direct, indirect, special, incidental, or consequential damages (including but not limited to lost profits, business, or revenue in any way), regardless of the legal theory asserted including warranty, contract, negligence, or strict liability.

## 10 Other Product Information

Always confirm that you have the most current version of the applicable product bulletin, information folder, or other product information from 3M's Website at <http://www.3M.com/roadsafety>.

## 11 Literature References

[3M IF 4.9](#) Application Instructions for Diamond Grade Conspicuity Markings Series 983

ASTM Test Methods are available from ASTM International, West Conshohocken, PA.

**For Information or Assistance**

**Call: 1-800-553-1380**

**In Canada Call:**

**1-800-3M HELPS (1-800-364-3577)**

**Internet:**

<http://www.3M.com/roadsafety>

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