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All About Wax Coated Packaging

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Did you know many paper products are coated in a thin layer of wax? Keep reading to learn all about wax-coated packaging products.

How Is Wax Applied To Paper Products?

There are a few different ways wax is applied to paper products.

- Wet waxing (aka wax bath): A sheet of paper is immersed in the wax
- Roll-on or dry waxing: Wax is rolled on the sheet of paper using rollers
- Laminating: Wax is applied to printed paper and is used to bond two substrates together, such as foil to paper or paper to paper.

Paper can also be printed with a pattern of wax, which does not fully cover the paper itself. The roller used would have a pattern, such as honeycomb.

After the paper goes through the coating process, it is cooled by being run over one or more cooling drums. These drums instantly harden the wax so the paper can be rewound onto a ream. Each ream of paper is approximately 3,000 sq. ft. and contains anywhere from 2 to 30 lbs. of wax depending on what the end use would be. For example, butcher paper would have a heavier coating of wax than candy wrappers.

How Much Wax Is Used To Coat Paper Products?

The amount of wax added to the paper depends on what the paper will be used for. For example, butcher paper has a thicker wax coating on it compared to a candy wrapper. For a ream of paper, which is approximately 3,000 square feet, there can be up to 30 pounds of wax on it.

What Type Of Wax Is Used To Coat?

Paper products are coated in low-mid melt point waxes. Waxed paper used for cooking or baking typically uses a mid-melt wax. Deli papers, interleaf sheets and patty papers usually use a low melt, low coat weight paraffin wax for grease and moisture resistance. Sandwich and butcher paper wraps are coated in a modified wax blend to give it heat, moisture and grease resistance with slip properties. Additives like EVA polymers, polyethylenes and other surface modification materials are also used.

Why Is Wax Added To Paper Products?

Wax is added to paper products to make the paper more durable and moisture resistant. The thin coating of wax keeps the paper product from disintegrating when it comes into contact with moisture, like grease or water. That is why you can enjoy your greasy burger without it soaking through the paper, or unwrap a taffy without it sticking to its wrapper.

Wax is also added to paper products to keep things from sticking to it. Chewy candies are often wrapped in wax-coated paper to make them easy to unwrap.

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