



Neumann
MARKING SOLUTIONS

Identification Systems for Heavy Industry

HEAT SHRINK TUBING GUIDE

Portable and desktop printers utilize thermal printing directly on to heat shrink tubing for wire and cable identification. In an industrial setting this can result in marking a process cable both at the operators end and the production end. When service personnel modify a cable harness, they can immediately identify the cable with a new legend and a unique colour of heat shrink tubing.

HISTORY

Paul Cook of the Raychem Corporation invented heat shrink tubing in the late 1950's. Heat shrink tubing is a wonder product. Technically speaking, by using radiation chemistry, Cook was able to create the heat shrinkable tube. He did this by crosslinking plastic tubing with a process of heating, expanding and cooling. This means the tubing will shrink back to its original diameter when heat is applied. Interestingly, heat shrink tubing shrinks radially and not longitudinally when heated.

APPLICATIONS

Heat shrink tubing is used to offer protection and identification where cables and wires connect.

Some typical uses of heat shrink tubing are:

- Colour coding of wires or cables
- Connecting multiple wires together in a wiring harness
- Identifying network connection cables
- Identifying cables in electrical panels



For convenience, heat shrink tubing and print ribbon can be combined in a single cartridge. Simply placing the cartridge in the printer, typing your legend and pressing print gives you a finished product that is ready to slip over the wire. Applying heat then shrinks the tube to fit snugly around the wire. The use of the cartridge and printer allows the technician to print on location, eliminating returning to the office to have the sleeves ordered.



For production, heat shrink tubing can be ordered in spools containing 100's of feet to be printed with a desktop thermal printer. These printers can be fitted with a cutter to either completely cut the tube between each legend or partially cut the tube. Completely cut means the individual pieces will need to be sorted and contained; partially cut means the strip is continuous with a small "tab" holding it together. Installers like this feature because they do not have to sort their legends prior to installation.

Heat shrink tubing can also be precut at the factory to a predetermined length, mounted on a backing and printed in a desktop thermal printer. This format does not require a cutter or other manipulation after printing.

Heat shrink tubing in cartridge, spools or pre-formatted, are all available at Neumann Marking Solutions. Our consultative approach guarantees you will have the right product for the job.

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