Motorize Your Fingerprint Brush

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(presented at the IAI poster session in Greensboro, NC)

Dusting for suspected latent prints can be easier using a fingerprint brush attached
to an electrical hand tool. Electrical drills or screwdrivers provide speed and ease
for processing large scenes for items.

Crime scene processing techniques and procedures are as varied and diversified as
the crimes themselves. Although new methods and equipment routinely come and go,
the old standby method of dusting to develop latent prints has basically remained
unchanged for years. Fingerprint brushes are dipped into powder and the surfaces
with suspected latent prints are brushed for the purpose of visualizing the latent
prints. Dusting itself may be on the verge of being an antiquated technique due to
the ready availability of portable fuming tanks, forensic light sources, and dyes.

However, for those who still prefer to “dust” or to follow fuming with “dusting”,
the use of a fiberglass fingerprint brush, mounted on the end of an electrical hand
tool, such as a low speed drill or screwdriver, can be a blessing at large crime scenes
or processing of large items. The shaft of the brush may have to be adapted to fit the
chuck of the tool. Cordless electrical hand tools enable the user to process items when
electrical outlets are unavailable. Simply use the motorized brush to initially develop the
print, but do not overdo it. Then finish or “dress” the latent print using manual methods as before. Care must be taken not to use high speed tools or an excessive amount of powder. Also, only the extreme ends of the bristles of the brush should make contact
with the surface. A second brush or atomizer can be used to carry the powder to the
surface. It is recommended to practice using the new equipment prior to actual use
of crime scene evidence.

This is a handy little tool, which may be of help, when dusting for latent prints. It
may not be the invention of the century to make fingerprint work a breeze, but an
additional tool for large scenes or items.

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NOTICE

At our business meeting on April 1, 1995, in Morgantown, WV, a motion was made and approved that each member's specialty be published in the Membership Roster. In order to compile this information, it will be necessary that EACH CBD-IAI member complete the form that is on the bottom of this notice, and return it to the Secretary as soon as possible. The new Membership Rosters are due to be out by Winter '96/'97 meeting.

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER SPECIALTY INFORMATION

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PLEASE NUMBER UP TO THREE AREAS OF YOUR EXPERTISE

Indicate your primary discipline as Number 1, then other areas as 2, 3, etc.

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