

Resolution Handbook



Complaint Guidelines

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Billerud's commitment to being the most reliable paper product supplier in the industry is defined, in large part, by our commitment to quality. We are continuously focused on improving the quality of our products and services and want you to be satisfied with your experience in doing business with Billerud. When an issue does occur, Billerud will work to resolve it as quickly and equitably as possible. This handbook is intended to act as a guideline for the prompt resolution of difficulties or claims that may be caused by paper or service which is less than satisfactory to you, our customer. Transit Damage Claims will be handled in accordance with the Transit Damage Claims Policy published at billerud.com in the Products section.

Feedback

As with any continuous improvement process, timely feedback is a critical component for evaluating progress. The most important input we receive is the feedback from customers. Your feedback enables us to fine tune our manufacturing and service systems to better serve your needs. Please contact your Billerud Sales or Customer Technical Service Representative and let us know how we are doing. Or you can send your comments via email to contactus@billerud.com.

Product Performance Claims

LIMITS OF LIABILITY

Billerud's products are guaranteed against defects in quality. Our liability for claims will not exceed the purchase price of the paper in question nor is Billerud responsible for any consequential or incidental damages related to the use of our products. Additionally, no claims will be allowed if the paper has been used or rendered commercially unmarketable. These limits of liability apply to all statements in this handbook.

NOTIFICATION

Claims will be considered only if reported immediately and if the paper is held so it may be inspected before continued use. If paper defects that would cause a rejection of the finished piece by the final customer are suspected, the run should be halted and Billerud notified. If the run is continued without authorization from a Billerud Customer Technical Service (CTS) Representative, and the end product is rejected, Billerud cannot be held responsible for the charges.

All claims must be submitted within 30 days of their occurrence.

DOCUMENTATION AND EVIDENCE

In order to accept a claim for a paper defect, it is necessary for the customer to provide complete documentation and supporting physical evidence to Billerud. This will allow the Billerud Customer Technical Service Representative to accurately determine the root cause, thereby preventing recurrence, and facilitate prompt resolution of the claim. Billerud cannot be held responsible for any liability when proper documentation and evidence are not provided by the customer in a timely manner. Please refer to the section on **Documentation and Sampling Procedures** in this handbook for specific requirements.

Adequate evidence or documentation is required to support any rejection or claim. Any claim not adequately documented or supported by proper evidence may be denied.

TIMELY RESPONSE

A Billerud Customer Technical Service Representative will respond to an issue within 24 hours or one business day of contact.

CLAIM SETTLEMENT

If defects in paper quality are confirmed, the paper will be replaced or a credit issued to the customer, provided that the claim is processed in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

ACCEPTANCE OF CLAIM

In no case should customers debit Billerud until a claim has been verified by Billerud and until notification of Billerud's acceptance of claim. No acknowledgment of claim responsibility can be made on Billerud's behalf by anyone other than a Billerud Customer Technical Service or Sales Representative.

DISPOSITION OF DEFECTIVE PAPER

The disposition of rejected paper will be at the discretion of Billerud. We will not assume responsibility for the return, shipment or other disposition of rejected paper without prior authorization by a Billerud Customer Technical Service Representative. This policy applies to all rejected paper regardless of cause of rejection. Any paper authorized for return or other disposition must be properly identified and packaged.

REPLACEMENT OF DEFECTIVE PAPER

When a complaint has been investigated and Billerud agrees that replacement stock is required, we will make every reasonable effort to meet the delivery needs of the customer. Only Billerud Customer Technical Service Representatives can authorize arranging for replacement paper. Replacement orders will be invoiced at the same price as the original order.

If a replacement order cannot be made in time to meet the customer's needs, a substitution to a larger size, more costly grade and/or process can only be made with the approval of a Billerud Customer Technical Service Representative. In the event that a replacement order is not or cannot be delivered in time to meet the customer's needs, Billerud will not be liable for any additional costs that may be incurred without prior authorization by Billerud.

If a replacement order is needed before Billerud Customer Technical Service Representative can authorize it, the order will be entered as a "back-up" and priced accordingly. If Billerud Customer Technical Service Representative ultimately confirms it should be classified as replacement, it will be changed to replacement status.

GRADE SELECTION

Billerud cannot assume responsibility for inadequate product performance when a grade or weight of paper is not suitable for the end use for which it has been selected. Grade selection is the responsibility of the purchaser. Information to aid in the proper selection of paper is available from your Billerud Sales Representative or at billerud.com in the Products section.

In addition, Billerud will not participate in a claim for a product used in a process for which it was not designed. As an example, papers guaranteed for digital applications, toner or inkjet, by Billerud are designed for specific Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) technology and in full cooperation of the OEM. Any paper used by a printer for a digital press, toner or inkjet, without a mill guarantee for that specific press is not subject to the claims process and not considered fit for use.

MOISTURE AND AGE RELATED ISSUES

Billerud uses moisture resistant materials to protect our products from adverse moisture conditions during transit and storage. The integrity of wrap on our materials is required in order to preserve the specifications of the materials as produced and to maintain dimensional stability for successful runnability and convertability in subsequent printing and converting operations. However, if the paper is not stored or conditioned properly by the printer, converter or warehouse before and during the job, optimum performance will not be achieved. Billerud cannot be responsible for problems caused by excessive age or excessive changes or imbalances of humidity or temperature conditions in the customer's or user's plant or warehouse.

Billerud will honor a rejection for moisture and age related problems up to 1 year from the day of shipment for groundwood containing papers and our specialty products and 2 years for freesheet papers, provided the original wrapper is intact.

Billerud will not be responsible for register problems, wrinkling or other effects on presses or converting equipment, if excessive age or moisture imbalance occurs between paper storage area, pressroom or finishing rooms, and the paper Relative Humidity (RH) is not within Billerud specifications (70° to 75° F at 40-50% RH).

PRINTING AND SUBSEQUENT FINISHING

When printing Billerud roll products on heatset presses, there is always the possibility of extreme dehydration of the stock during the drying of inks. Because of this, claims for any cracking at the folds and/or converting problems that occur after printing in either in-line finishing systems, auxiliary, or other bindery operations cannot be considered.

Fluting is also a property of the heatset web offset printing process and has been found to be dependent on form layout and ink coverage. Billerud cannot consider claims for fluting due to these factors outside of our control.

It is the customer's and/or printer's responsibility to determine the suitability of Billerud's products to achieve the desired results in converting operations after heatset printing.

Billerud will not guarantee the curl tendencies of our products through the oven of a web offset or gravure press due to potential heat-induced curl problems related to oven conditions which are beyond our control.

UV COATING APPLICATION ON A HEAT-SET WEB PRESS

When Ultraviolet (UV) coating is applied over a heat-set web offset ink, the residual oils in the ink film will prevent good adhesion of UV clear coating. Further, the adhesion of the clear coating to the ink will degrade over time. There are many factors in the printing process that have significant impact on the success of UV coating adhesion to ink film. In particular, the amount of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)'s in the inks and the time and temperature of the drying process prior to UV coating application are controlling factors which determine success. As a result of these press conditions that are outside our control, we cannot guarantee success of our heat-set web offset papers for the post-print application of UV coating.

WEB BREAKS

Billerud recognizes the importance of good mechanical performance. Web break standards vary greatly within the industry depending on equipment, paper grade, basis weight, roll width, and diameter. Billerud will review all claims for excessive web breaks believed to be paper-related on an individual basis. Evidence is required of each break to justify web break claims.

Criteria to reject single rolls are:

- Two identifiable paper-caused breaks for the same reason with evidence
- Three unknown web breaks which are not supported by evidence, but are suspected to be paper-caused, will be reviewed for possible rejection

Note: Web break evidence must include roll and mill order numbers and defect identification.

MILL SPLICES

There will be a maximum of three splices on any single roll of any size. There will not be any splices:

- Within four inches of the core
- Within one inch of the top of the roll
- Less than one inch apart

Note: All of the above measurements are based on radius. All splices will be marked on the roll.

DAMAGE TO PLATES AND BLANKETS

Billerud will honor customer's claims for damaged plates and blankets only when evidence provided indicates that it was caused by a paper defect. Verification of defect should include before and after printed samples and the actual damaged plate or blanket. Billerud will consider cost of replacement only (not including press downtime and/or labor associated with the replacement of the plate or blanket).

PRESS TIME CHARGES

Performance claims will be accepted for review only after the entire order has been consumed. No claims will be accepted against a portion of any order.

Claims on orders of less than fifty rolls will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and will not be subject to pre-set claim tolerances.

Evidence must be provided to validate a web break as paper-related.

Unknown web breaks cannot be included to reach the claimable threshold. However, if a product defect has been identified and unknown breaks have occurred within the same run, unknown web breaks could possibly be considered in the total claim.

Press rates will be negotiated not to exceed printer's cost. Premium rates will not be considered. Claims for lost press time will be considered only if Billerud is part of that decision. Billerud will allow a maximum of 30 minutes of press time per web break.

Claims for lost press time on single roll breaks/rejections cannot be accepted.

Billerud will not pay for a delamination problem at the printer's splice.

CUSTOMER SHEETING AND SLITTING

Billerud will not be responsible for registration or distortion problems when a customer prints short grain. Because of the inherent difficulty of maintaining dimensional stability when printing short grain paper, any associated problems, such as mis-registering or wrinkling, will not be deemed to be a failure of paper to conform to specification.

For customers that sheet our roll products: Billerud will not participate in a claim for a defect that would normally have been detected in our own inspection process.

Billerud is not responsible for finishing related defects when paper has been sheeted, trimmed or re-trimmed after leaving the mill, or for roll products printed in sheet form.

Billerud will not participate in a claim for a product used in a process for which it was not designed.

Billerud is not responsible for paying added value to converters, claims for machine time to converters, or trimming or distortion problems for paper cut from its original size.

SHEETFED USE OF WEB OFFSET PRODUCTS

In the event that Billerud agrees to supply web offset products for sheetfed offset printing applications, the following policy will apply:

- Billerud will not be held liable for problems that may arise as a result of using web products for sheetfed printing applications. Specifically, skid condition, sheet mechanical condition, bags, welts, etc., that would otherwise run successfully in a web offset application. Billerud also will not guarantee the product for surface strength relative to picking, converting contamination (e.g., cutter, slitter dust) and general sheetfed press runnability. Billerud will stand behind the product for any defect that would normally affect a web offset operation with the exception of those defects which we would have detected and culled during our sheeting operations (e.g., slime holes, splices, blade streaks, etc.).

OUTSIDE CONVERTING

Including Sheeter Rolls in Support of Billerud Product Line, Private Label, Use of Right Angle Sheeters or Products Rewound by the Customer or an Outside Converter

Billerud will honor claims for surface defects typically associated with papermaking operations provided documentation and evidence accompany each claim and the claim is reviewed and verified by a Billerud Customer Technical Service Representative. These issues must be documented and reported during the converting process. Billerud will accept rejections (of white paper only) for those conditions under this agreement. Billerud will not accept rejections of processed material (printed waste) or rewinding/converting costs.

For Sheets: Billerud will not reimburse for incidental costs for defects that would normally have been detected and culled during our own sheeting operations (e.g., slime holes, splices, blade scratches/streaks, mixed shade products, biased cuts, etc.). Billerud will not participate in claims for moisture related problems (e.g., first or second pass register issues, image distortion or doubling problems) due to exposure of the product to adverse ambient conditions not in our control. Billerud will not accept rejections or pay incidental costs for slitter dust or cutter dust problems.

For Rolls: Billerud will not reimburse for costs related to roll edge quality, holes, wrinkles, splices introduced by the converter, bursts in the rolls, core related complaints or any other defects that are not related to our papermaking process, wrapping/packaging, transportation and/or items that are not reported during the rewinding process.

Documentation and Sampling Procedures

INFORMATION NEEDED

Complete and organized information should be provided to Billerud when submitting a claim. This will help in making a proper determination in a reasonable time period. All information relevant to the claim should be filled out. Billerud's Quality Claim form can be found at billerud.com in the Products section.

If a claim form is unavailable, the following information should be provided:

- Name of the printer
- Contact person and phone number
- Mill order number
- Roll numbers/Skid number/Carton number
- Explanation of the problem
- Paper details (grade, basis weight and quantity)
- Press equipment information (process type, make, size, number of units, ink brand, fountain solution brand, pH, etc.)
- Plant conditions
- Current disposition of paper involved
- Additional comments (what performed well; what did not)

The importance of providing complete and accurate information cannot be overstated. Your Billerud Sales or Customer Technical Service Representative will assist in gathering information if needed.

INK SAMPLING

If the problem is thought to be ink related, a four-ounce sample from both the fountain and the can, drum or tote should be placed in a small airtight container. A copy of the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) should be included with the sample so as not to delay testing.

PRINTED SAMPLES

At least 12 consecutive sheets or signatures clearly showing the defect are required. The sheet containing the original defect (i.e., pick-out) should be sent with the defect prominently marked for proper sampling of other converted product. Please consult your Billerud Customer Technical Service Representative for additional help. Be sure the paper is properly identified with roll/skid numbers.

UNPRINTED SAMPLES

At least 12 sheets of paper which have not gone through the press should be provided. Unprinted paper is required for testing at the mill in order to determine the validity of the claim. Sheeted paper should be wrapped and shipped flat. Paper in roll form should have a length of approximately 10 feet neatly rolled and placed in a mailing tube. Be sure that the paper is properly identified with roll/skid numbers.

TAPE PULLS

Contaminants which accumulate either on the plate and/or blanket should be retrieved for further analysis. This can be easily accomplished by taking a "tape pull". Clear tape with a strong adhesive should be used. The tape should be pressed over the contaminant in order to pull it from the plate or blanket. The resulting pull should then be placed on a sheet of clean, clear Mylar.* The tape should be identified as to where it was taken (i.e., unit number, top/bottom, number of impressions since last wash up, etc.).

**Note: Do not mount the tape pulls on paper or cardboard.*

FOUNTAIN SOLUTION

If the problem is related to the fountain solution, a sample from the press fountain should be sent in a clean plastic container. If additional samples of tap water and/or concentrate are required, please consult with your Billerud Customer Technical Service Representative. A Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) should be included with any sample sent. Also, include information as to the mixture being used.

ACTUAL VERIFICATION

It may be necessary for the problem to be viewed by a representative of Billerud for verification (for issues such as baggy rolls, for example). In this instance, information on the problem should be sent to your Billerud Customer Technical Service Representative and arrangements made for a representative to view the paper at the printing site.

Product Storage, Preparation & Usage Guidelines

PRODUCT STORAGE AND CONDITIONING

Ideal storage conditions are generally considered to be 70° to 75° F at 40-50% RH. Additionally, it is recommended that paper be used on a first-in-first-out basis.

PRODUCT PREPARATION

Billerud recommends keeping the wrapper on the roll or skid as long as possible to maintain the integrity of the product.

RUNNING ROLLS BY POSITION

Billerud strongly recommends rolls be printed by log position for optimal efficiency. Please contact your Billerud Customer Technical Service Representative for additional information.

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