FAQs

Copper Installation

Q **What is the general purpose of fluxes?**

A Flux is formulated to clear the pipe and fitting of any surface oxidation.

Q **Are all fluxes safe for use on water lines?**

A Yes. All Oatey fluxes are lead free and are NSF listed to Standard #61.

Q **What is the difference between #5 and #95 fluxes?**

A The #95 paste flux contains a silver solder tinning powder which helps fill in the joint when heat is applied. #5 does not.

Q **What is the best flux and solder to use for Low-Lead Brass?**

A The best flux is Oatey H2O®95 and Oatey Silver Solders.

Q **What is Tinning Flux, and what are its recommended uses?**

A Tinning Flux has a small amount of powdered solder in the paste that makes soldering easier. You can use Tinning Flux on Low-Lead Brass if you are a novice user of solder products, or for large diameter piping systems to help make the process easier.

Q **What is the purpose for using the Oatey Flame Protector when soldering?**

A Use the Oatey Flame Protector when the joint you are soldering is close to a finished surface that can brown or catch fire when the flame touches it. You simply position the flame protector between the joint and the surface to keep the finished surface from being damaged from the flame.

Q **Which solder should be used when installing water lines?**

A Silver Lead Free, 95/5 and Instant Solder are approved for this application.

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Q **What are the melting ranges for Oatey Solders?**

A

Silver/Safe-Flo Lead Free	(420°F to 460°F)	Acid Core 50/50	(361°F to 421°F)
95/5	(450°F to 464°F)	Acid Core 40/60	(361°F to 460°F)
95/5 Acid & Rosin Core	(450°F to 464°F)	Rosin Core 60/40	(361°F to 375°F)
50/50	(361°F to 421°F)	Rosin Core 40/60	(361°F to 460°F)
40/60	(361°F to 460°F)		

Q **How long can you leave flux on the pipe before soldering the joints?**

A It is important that you never flux a pipe that will not be soldered within a 4 hour period of time. Flux is an acid and will have an etching affect if left on the pipe too long without heat and solder being applied.

Q **What type of solder and flux are recommended to solder aluminum?**

A None. Oatey does not manufacture a solder or flux for this application.

Q **What type of solder and flux are recommended to solder electronics?**

A Oatey 95/5 Lead free Rosin Core Wire Solder, or Oatey Rosin Core Wire Solder.

Q **What type of solder and flux are recommended to solder heat ducts?**

A Oatey 95/5 Lead Free Acid Core Wire Solder, or Oatey Acid Core Wire Solder.

Q **What type of solder and flux are recommended when used in food grade processes?**

A None. Oatey does not manufacture a solder or flux for this application.

Q **What type of solder and flux are recommended to solder stainless steel?**

A None. Oatey does not manufacture a solder or flux for this application.

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Q **What is the difference between water soluble and non-soluble (petroleum base) flux?**

A The water soluble flux is less corrosive, and self-cleans on the interior of the pipe as water flows through the lines. The water soluble flux has a narrower temperature range when heating, but it works with all solders.

Q **How do I flush flux out of my water lines?**

A You will start off by getting a five gallon bucket and small electric pump with two washing machine hoses. Mix 1-one pound box of TSP (Tri-Sodium Phosphate), 16 ounces (2 cups) of bleach and hot water in the five gallon bucket. Drain enough water from your system to allow this mixture to be pumped into the water lines, and circulate throughout the system for one hour. The best location for hose connections is the hot and cold washing machine valves. Drain the system completely and repeat this process again. After the second application, you will want to flush the system out through each fixture for at least 15 minutes.

Q **Are fluxes corrosive?**

A Yes. Flux is designed as an oxidation remover and actually etches the pipe in preparation for the soldering process to be successful. This is why it is important to flush the lines when not using water soluble fluxes. Wipe excess flux off the exterior of the pipe after solder joint has been completed, and never wait more than 4 hours to solder a joint after applying any flux to the joint.

Q **Does Oatey have a brazing solder and flux?**

A No. Oatey does not manufacture a solder or flux for this application.

Q **What is the difference between Oatey Silver Lead Free solder and Oatey Safe-Flo solder?**

A The only difference is that Safe-Flo is the retail branded version.

Q **How much silver is in Oatey Silver solder?**

A Less than 2%.

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Q **What is the shelf life of Oatey fluxes?**

A 2 years from date of manufacture.

Q **Do you need to stir Oatey fluxes before applying it to the joints?**

A Yes. It is very important to stir upwards from the container bottom to insure any salts which have settled are mixed evenly into the flux. This should be done before the start of each project.

Q **How can excess flux be removed from the exterior of pipe after the joint has been soldered?**

A After the soldering process is completed while the pipe is still warm, you can wipe the joint with a dry clean rag to remove the excess flux. If the pipe has cooled or fluids are passing through it, you can use mild detergents (i.e. Dawn dish detergent) to wash off the excess flux.

Q **What is the diameter of bulk solder?**

A Half pound and one pound sizes range from .084 to .117 in diameter, and five pound sizes are always .117 in diameter.

Q **What is the diameter of carded solder?**

A All carded solders range from .084 to .117 in diameter with the exception of 95/5 which is .081 in diameter.