

# Analytical Solutions

for BioTechnology

May 9, 2007 (Version 2.0)

## BN 1365

### Characterization of Surface Contamination

#### Discussion

Elemental characterization of defects and contamination on surfaces is a necessity for failure analysis. Energy Dispersive X-Ray Spectrometry (EDS), combined with Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM) provides a rapid and efficient tool for characterizing particles and defects which are on the order of 1 micron and larger. Modern instruments allow for the detection of light elements (B through F), as well as the heavier Z elements, and for simultaneous imaging of multiple elements. The lateral distribution of seven elements is shown in Figure 1 along with secondary electron and back-scattered electron images. From this collection of images it is readily determined that the contamination is a conglomeration of carbon bearing material and oxides of Mg, Al and Si.

For particles and defects smaller than 1 micron, the ideal tool is Field Emission Auger Electron Spectroscopy (FE-AES). With this instrument, features as small as two hundred angstroms can be characterized elementally. An example is given in Figure 2. The Auger survey spectrum of a 500 Å particle on a silicon wafer reveals the particle contains aluminum.

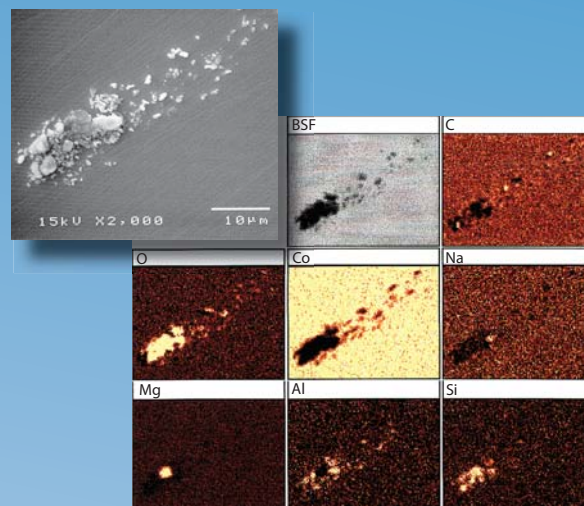


Figure 1. Secondary Electron Image (SEI) of the surface defect and associated EDS elemental images and back-scattered electron image.

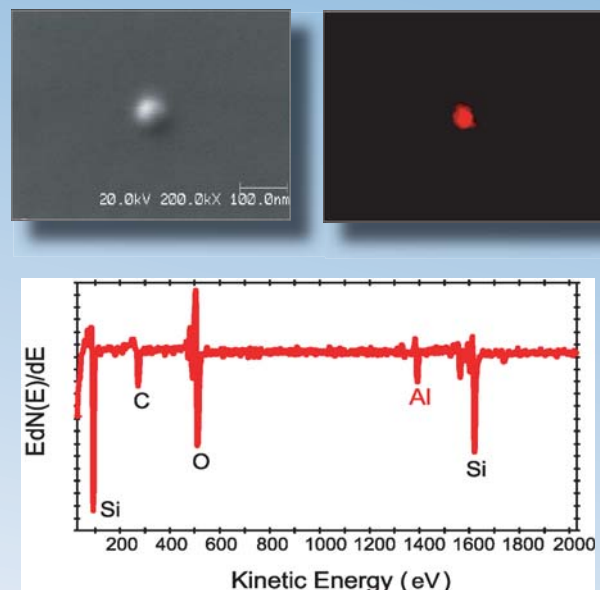
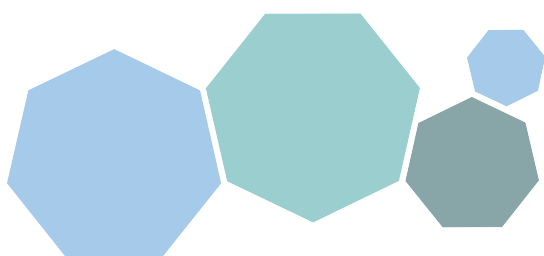


Figure 2. Auger survey spectrum (bottom) of the 500 Å particle shown in the secondary electron image (top-left) reveals aluminum contamination.



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**United States Locations**

Tempe, Arizona  
+1 480 239 0602 info.az@eaglabs.com  
+1 602 470 2655 fax

Sunnyvale, California  
810 Kifer Road  
+1 408 530 3500 info.ca@eaglabs.com  
+1 408 530 3501 fax

1135 E Arques Avenue  
+1 408 738 3033  
+1 408 738 3035 fax

785 Lucerne Drive  
+1 408 737 3892  
+1 408 737 3916 fax

Peabody, Massachusetts  
+1 978 278 9500 info.ma@eaglabs.com  
+1 978 278 9501 fax

Chanhassen, Minnesota  
+1 952 828 6411 info.mn@eaglabs.com  
+1 952 828 6449 fax

East Windsor, New Jersey  
+1 609 371 4800 info.nj@eaglabs.com  
+1 609 371 5666 fax

Syracuse, New York  
+1 315 431 9900 info.ny@eaglabs.com  
+1 315 431 9800 fax

Raleigh, North Carolina  
+1 919 829 7041 info.nc@eaglabs.com  
+1 919 829 5518 fax

Round Rock, Texas  
+1 512 671 9500 info.tx@eaglabs.com  
+1 512 671 9501 fax

**International Locations**

Shanghai, China  
+ 86 21 6879 6088 info.cn@eaglabs.com  
+ 86 21 6879 9086 fax

Tournefeuille, France  
+ 33 5 61 73 15 29 info.fr@eaglabs.com  
+ 33 5 61 73 15 67 fax

Frankfurt, Germany  
+ 49 (0) 693053213 info.de@eaglabs.com  
+ 49 (0) 69307941 fax

Tokyo, Japan  
+ 81 3 5396 0531 info.jp@eaglabs.com  
+ 81 3 5396 1930 fax

HsinChu, Taiwan  
+ 886 3 5632303 info.tw@eaglabs.com  
+ 886 3 5632306 fax

Uxbridge, United Kingdom  
+ 44 (0) 1895 811194 info.uk@eaglabs.com  
+ 44 (0) 1895 810350 fax