



Technical Bulletin

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EDGE CODES: What do they mean to you?

Since 1964 edge codes have been used to “standardize” the way in which the brake industry identifies friction materials. This standard, SAE J866a, was published by a conglomeration of automotive companies’ engineers, called the Society of Automotive Engineers (S.A.E.). SAE J866a is a “SAE Recommended Practice” laid out for all brake friction manufacturers to use to identify and qualify the frictional properties of their product.

The edge code is important to because it contains an identification code (IAP), an alpha-numeric code that references the type of friction formula (9002), a numeric date (2290), and 2 alpha characters (FF) determining the frictions properties laid out by SAE J866a. This bulletin focuses on the 2 alpha characters of the edge code (e.g. EE, FF, GG, EF, etc.).



In the past myths have been passed down through distributors, installers, and other users of friction products. The *opinions* about the meaning of “EE or FF” have amplified the significance of the edge code. For instance, some believe that one product is better than the other solely based on the “EE or FF” in the edge code. This is a simple distortion of facts. The edge code (EE etc...) has nothing to do with the quality, wear, or stopping performance of the product.

The “EE” edge code simply represents the coefficient of friction values taken from the SAE J866a Recommended Practice. The detailed document is on the second page of this document. To summarize the test, the first letter of the code represents the “Normal” coefficient (temperatures = 200-400 F) , the second letter represents the “High coefficient (temperatures = 300-650 F). Neither of which indicate the wear resistance, toughness, dust resilience, or noise resistance.

Another misinformation about edge codes is the relationship to “hardness” of the friction material. A frictions’ hardness alone has nothing to do with its performance in stopping, wear, fade, or even noise resilience. Friction is a composite of materials; such as steel, rubber, crushed walnut shells, copper, ceramic, and many types of resins. These materials and the method by which they are mixed, formed, and cured dictate how the product will perform.

There are many ways to gauge performance, quality, and durability of friction materials but edge codes is not one of them. Inwood Automotive Products, Inc. recommends brake industry accepted practices such as SAE standards and OEM specs be followed to properly evaluate your brake friction. We follow these “Recommended Practices” and are supporters of future standards to be set by SAE and the Brake Manufacturer Council. Please feel free to contact us if you have comments or questions about the friction material you are using. Inwood Automotive Products, Inc. has been a part of the brake friction industry since 1972, and we pride ourselves in quality and superior customer service.

Inwood Automotive Products Co., Inc.
Cincinnati, Ohio

www.inwoodauto.com
877-4INWOOD(446-9663)

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