

# Acid . . . It's not just about indigestion!



## Acid attack!

Stomachs aren't the only things that hate excess acid!

Acid in standard mat boards and mounting boards – made of wood pulp paper, which inherently contains acid – can be a major source of damage to your framed art and memorabilia.

## Where does acid come from?

Blame it on those twin troublemakers – lignin and alum. A component of wood and wood pulp, lignin – a binding agent that holds wood together – makes acid as it degrades and turns paper yellow and brittle, especially if it's exposed to the sun. Alum, a popular sizing, destroys paper in a few years by eating away at it from within.

Even paper that starts out as acid-free can become acidic by acid migrating from such things as wood or wood pulp paper and from pollution.

Regular corrugated cardboard, mat board and wood frame mouldings can all send acid creeping into artwork.

## Short-term relief

Manufacturers can add a chemical buffer to regular mat boards, usually calcium carbonate, the same ingredient found in stomach antacids!

In the same way antacids help you recover from overindulgence, chemical buffers absorb or neutralize acid. And just as your stomach will twinge again after a short time, the effect on regular mat boards also is short-lived. If the only description on a paper or board is that it is "acid-free," then assume it is not preservation quality.

## The solution

Only papers and boards that manufacturers say are made of 100 percent cotton "rag" – or alpha-cellulose, lignin-free and buffered – can be considered true preservation quality. Ask your professional picture framer to explain and show you a range of these quality mat boards!

*A qualified professional framer will play an important role in the preservation of your art through the use of proper protective materials. Care should be taken in selecting a professional framer who is knowledgeable in preservation framing methods, which will help protect valuable art.*

*The Professional Picture Framers Association™ (PPFA®), the international trade association for the art and framing industry, works to elevate professional standards in the industry by providing advanced educational programs and encouraging the continued professional development of custom picture framers.*

*Look for the purple and white PPFA member decal on the shop door or window!*