

AGTA Industry Gemstone Advisory



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The purpose of this advisory is to inform our members and our clients of the presence of a new method of treatment being applied to some blue sapphire originating primarily from Sri Lanka and being processed in a treatment facility in South Korea. The information that we have is as follows:

1. The new method of treatment combines both pressure and heat, similar to the high pressure and high heat process used with diamond but with significantly lower pressure and heat application.
2. Because of the addition of pressure in the process, this is a new treatment that is distinctly different from the traditional methods of heat treatment used for blue sapphire.
3. The gemological scientific community, which includes the major gem laboratories, are aware of this new treatment and are conducting ongoing research on this process, which does improve color and clarity characteristics, as well as the treatment's possible effect on stability. We will keep the gemstone community updated as new information becomes available.
4. This new treatment does improve the apparent quality of the sapphire and as such is subject to both Federal Trade Commission Guides for the jewelry industry and the AGTA's Code of Ethics about treatment disclosure. For that reason, this new **treatment must be disclosed, in writing, by the seller to the buyer as pressure and heat treatment with the following AGTA Disclosure Code: HP** (see AGTA Gemstone Information Manual <https://agta.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/15thEditionGemstoneInformationManual.pdf>). If the buyer is a consumer then the disclosure must be done in writing in clear language (e.g. *Sapphire is treated with heat and pressure*).

As our understanding of this new treatment develops, we will disseminate the information to the industry. We appreciate the engagement of the members of the New York Gemstone Association and all the individuals in the gemological scientific community who have contributed to this effort. In the meantime, remember that full disclosure of gemstone treatments is one of the unalterable underpinnings of the AGTA Code of Ethics. Ask your supplier if the gemstone you are buying has been subjected to this new treatment or any treatment involving the addition of pressure. All AGTA members remain committed to giving you clear, accurate and complete information so that you can feel confident with the product you present to your customers.

Please contact info@agta.org with any questions you may have concerning this alert.

Sincerely,
AGTA Board of Directors



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