

Tutorial VT-4: What To Do If You Spill Beer On Your Bench

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Introduction

I'm sure Bob Pease or Bob Widlar (no judgement in either case) wrote similar application notes, but I cannot find them.

If you grab a beer after a long day of coding, math and soldering and, while under the microscope, tip that beer over onto a pile of parts, what do you do? Figure 1 below shows a typical situation. Jim Williams type parts pile. Lots of places for liquid to wick and stick. Expensive parts. Bummer.

It's actually no big deal. You simply call your Applications Engineer at whoever's chips got wet. Working with them, you can calculate the cost of the spilled beer (which, these days, for good beer, is getting close to the price of nice mixed-signal chips) and decide if it is cheaper to replace the beer or the chips.

If the beer is more expensive, it is very painful to lick the beer off of the components (not to mention the risk of heavy metal poisoning if you are using non-ROHS parts!) but you may get advised to do just that. You don't have to, but economics is king, right?

If the chips are more expensive, you blot the spilled beer into paper towels, rinse the chips in isopropyl alcohol, then deionized water, then dry them under warmed, pure nitrogen gas.

Either way, if you are decent person, you will bring your Applications Engineer at least a four-pack of tall-boys of whatever beer it was that you spilled, which is probably the kind that they, themselves spill. After all, where would we be without Applications Engineers.

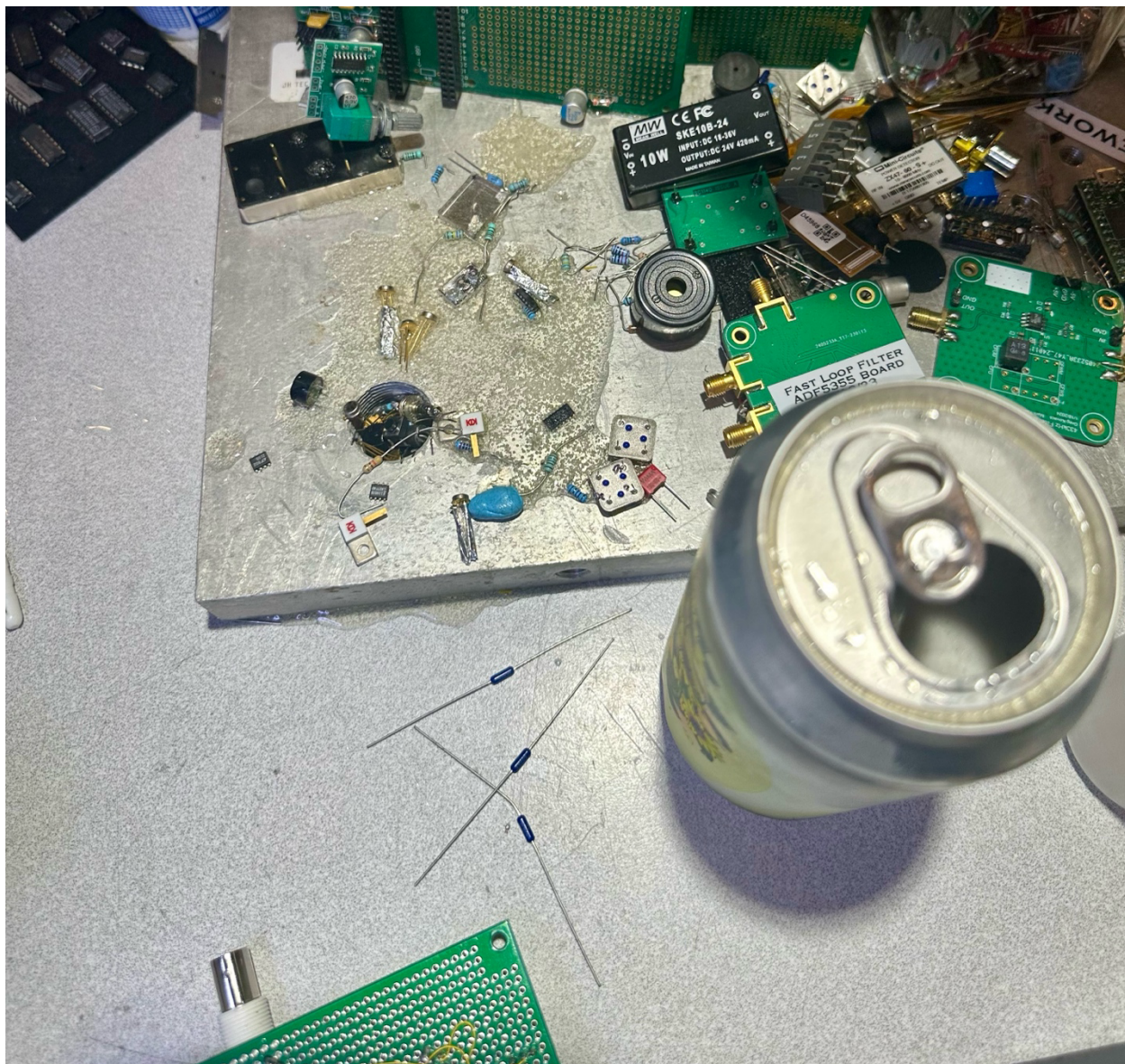


Figure 1: Spilled beer (in this case “Go Nuts,” cream ale from Kelly Brewing Company in Morgan Hill, CA) was sadly wasted in this way. This kind of thing is infrequent, but you never know, so a tutorial was created.

We hope that this tutorial has been useful!