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(72) Inventeurs/Inventors:
KILLILEA, T. HOWARD, US;
BOHANNON, JAMES M., US;
WU, SHAOBING, US;
CHEN, FRANK, US

(73) Propriétaire/Owner:
VALSPAR SOURCING, INC., US

(74) Agent: SMART & BIGGAR

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COATINGS, AND METHODS

(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**

An aqueous coating composition containing (i) a polymer having one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups; and (ii) an acid-functional polymer, which may be the same as or distinct from the polymer comprising acetoacetyl-functional groups, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been used to neutralize or partially neutralize the acid-functionality on the polymer.



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(71) Applicant (*for all designated States except US*):
VALSPAR SOURCING, INC. [US/US]; 1101 South
Third Street, Minneapolis, MN 55415 (US).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (*for US only*): **KILLILEA, T., Howard** [IE/US]; 70 Deer Hills Court, North Oaks, MN 55127 (US). **BOHANNON, James, M.** [US/US]; 1317 Florida Street, High Point, NC 27262 (US). **WU, Shaobing** [CN/US]; 3852 Windstream Way, Jamestown, NC 27782 (US). **CHEN, Frank** [US/US]; 5613 Boxborough Court, Greensboro, NC 27407 (US).

(74) Agent: **MUETING, Ann, M.**; Mueting, Raasch & Gebhardt, P.A., P.O. Box 581415, Minneapolis, MN 55458-1415 (US).

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(54) Title: AQUEOUS COATING COMPOSITIONS CONTAINING ACETOACETYL-FUNCTIONAL POLYMERS, COATINGS, AND METHODS

(57) Abstract: An aqueous coating composition containing (i) a polymer having one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups; and (ii) an acid-functional polymer, which may be the same as or distinct from the polymer comprising acetoacetyl-functional groups, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been used to neutralize or partially neutralize the acid-functionality on the polymer.

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Aqueous Coating Compositions Containing
Acetoacetyl-Functional Polymers, Coatings, and Methods

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BACKGROUND

There is a significant need for lower VOC-containing (volatile organic compound-containing) and formaldehyde-free systems in the coatings industry due to increasing environmental restrictions. Aqueous-based thermoplastic coatings, such as latexes can be applied with low levels of solvents and formaldehyde, but they do not have the hardness and chemical resistance required for many applications. Chemically crosslinked coatings, such as aqueous-based melamine cured coatings, that give good block and chemical resistance contain low levels of formaldehyde. For interior applications such as coatings for kitchen cabinets, however, many consumers desire "Green" systems, which are carcinogen free. Other crosslinking technologies such as blocked isocyanates or ethylenically unsaturated compounds also achieve the desired performance; however, these technologies are often cost prohibitive or highly irritating either to skin, eyes, or both.

Thus, what is needed are coating compositions that have one or more of the following properties: high performance, low VOC levels, substantially no formaldehyde content, and low irritation levels.

SUMMARY

5 The present invention provides aqueous coating compositions that include polymers having one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups. Such functionalized polymers are desirable because they can become part of a crosslinked network, thereby providing advantageous coating properties. Preferred compositions also possess one or more of the following properties: low VOC levels, substantially no formaldehyde content, high performance, and low irritation levels.

10 Such coating compositions can be coated onto a substrate and dried (e.g., cured), as with a paint, for example. Desirable performance characteristics of the coating include chemical resistance, abrasion resistance, hardness, gloss, reflectivity, appearance, or combinations of these characteristics, and other similar characteristics.

15 Polymers having one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups as described above can be latex polymers or water-dispersible polymers.

Preferred coating compositions include no more than 10 weight percent (wt-%) (more preferably, no more than 7 wt-%) volatile organic compounds (VOC), based on the total weight of the composition.

20 Preferred acetoacetyl-functional polymers include an acetoacetyl-functional polyurethane, epoxy, polyamide, chlorinated polyolefin, acrylic, oil-modified polymer, polyester, or mixtures or copolymers thereof. Preferably, acetoacetyl-functional polymers are prepared at a pH no more than 8.5, more preferably no more than a pH of 8.0, and most preferably at a pH no more than 7.8. In certain
25 embodiments, the acetoacetyl-functional polymer is an acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer. Preferably, the acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer includes latex particles having an average particle size (i.e., the average of the longest dimension of the particles, typically, a diameter) of less than 75 nm as measured by a Coulter N4 Plus.

30 Preferred coating compositions of the present invention include: water; a polymer comprising one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups; and an acid-functional polymer, which may be the same as or distinct from the polymer

comprising acetoacetyl-functional groups, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been used to neutralize or partially neutralize the acid-functionality on the polymer.

In addition to polymers having acetoacetyl-functionality, coating compositions of the present invention may also include ethylenically unsaturated compounds that are distinct from the acetoacetyl-functional polymers. Such compounds may be monomers, oligomers, polymers, or mixtures thereof. Preferred such ethylenically unsaturated compounds include (meth)acrylate functionality (wherein "(meth)acrylate" refers to an acrylate and a methacrylate), vinyl ether functionality, (meth)allyl ether functionality (wherein (meth)allyl ether refers to an allyl ether and a methallyl ether), or mixtures thereof. Preferably, the ethylenically unsaturated compound includes (meth)acrylate functionality. In certain embodiments, the (meth)acrylate functional compound is a multifunctional monomer.

Examples of (meth)acrylate-functional compounds include those selected from the group consisting of isobornyl (meth)acrylate, isodecyl (meth)acrylate, phenoxyethyl (meth)acrylate, trimethylolpropane tri(meth)acrylate, trimethylolpropane ethoxylate tri(meth)acrylate, dipropylene glycol di(meth)acrylate, tripropylene glycol di(meth)acrylate, hexanediol di(meth)acrylate, tetrahydrofurfuryl (meth)acrylate, beta-carboxyethyl (meth)acrylate, bisphenol A ethoxylate di(meth)acrylate, ethoxylated and propoxylated neopentyl glycol di(meth)acrylates, di-(trimethylolpropane tetra(meth)acrylate), pentaerythritol tri(meth)acrylate, pentaerythritol tetra(meth)acrylate, propoxylated glycerol tri(meth)acrylate, and mixtures thereof.

In certain embodiments of coating compositions of the present invention, the acetoacetyl-functional polymer comprises an acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer prepared from ethylenically unsaturated monomers.

The present invention also provides methods for coating that involve applying a coating composition to a substrate and allowing the coating composition to harden (e.g., by exposing the coating composition to radiation such as ultraviolet or visible light). Preferably, coating compositions of the present invention are at least partially curable by ultraviolet or visible light.

In one embodiment, a preferred method includes: providing a coating composition that includes: water; a polymer that includes one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups; and a (meth)acrylate functional compound distinct from the polymer having acetoacetyl-functionality; optionally an initiator (preferably a photoinitiator); applying the coating composition to a substrate surface; and at least partially curing the coating composition.

In another embodiment, the method includes: providing a coating composition that includes: water; a polymer comprising one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups; and an acid-functional polymer, which may be the same as or distinct from the polymer comprising acetoacetyl-functional groups, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been used to neutralize or partially neutralize the acid-functionality on the polymer; applying the coating composition to a substrate surface; and allowing the coating composition to harden.

In another embodiment, the method includes: providing a coating composition that includes: water; a polymer including one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups; and an ethylenically unsaturated compound distinct from the polymer having acetoacetyl-functionality; a photoinitiator; applying the coating composition to a substrate surface; and applying ultraviolet or visible light to the coating composition to at least partially cure the coating composition.

The present invention also provides coatings prepared or preparable from the coating compositions described herein. For example, a coating of the present invention is preparable by a method that involves applying a coating composition of the present invention to a substrate and allowing the coating composition to harden (e.g., by exposing the coating composition to radiation such as ultraviolet or visible light and at least partially curing).

Preferred coatings are cured by exposing the coating to radiation having a wavelength in the range of 10^{-3} to about 800 nm. More preferably, coating compositions of the present invention are exposed to ultraviolet or visible light in the range of about 200 nm to 800 nm. Coating compositions of this invention may also be cured by thermal means or other forms of radiation such as, for example, electron beam.

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Preferred coatings, which are designed to be cured by ultraviolet or visible light, are preferably exposed to 100 Mjoules/cm² to 15,000 Mjoules/cm², more preferably exposed to 100 Mjoules/cm² to 5000 Mjoules/cm², even more preferably exposed to 300 Mjoules/cm² to 2000 Mjoules/cm², and even more preferably
5 exposed to 500 Mjoules/cm² to 1750 Mjoules/cm².

According to one aspect of the present invention, there is provided a coating composition comprising: water; a polymer comprising one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups; an acid-functional polymer, which may be the same as or distinct from the polymer comprising acetoacetyl-functional groups, wherein a
10 nitrogen-free base has been used to neutralize or partially neutralize the acid-functionality of the polymer; an ethylenically unsaturated compound distinct from the acetoacetyl-functional polymer; wherein the ethylenically unsaturated compound is a monomer, oligomer, or mixture thereof; and a free-radical initiator in an amount of at least 0.1 wt-%, based on the total weight of the coating composition.

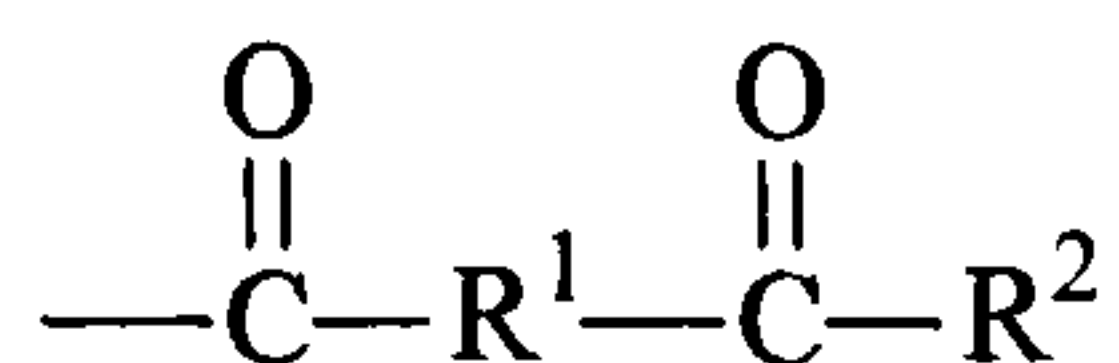
15 According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of coating a substrate, the method comprising: applying the coating composition described herein to a substrate; and allowing the coating composition to harden.

20 According to still another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a coating on a substrate preparable by the method described herein.

According to yet another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of preparing a coating composition, the method comprising: preparing an alkali-soluble polymer in water, wherein the alkali-soluble polymer may or may not include acetoacetyl-functional groups; in the presence of the alkali-soluble
25 polymer, polymerizing a polymer comprising one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups of the formula:

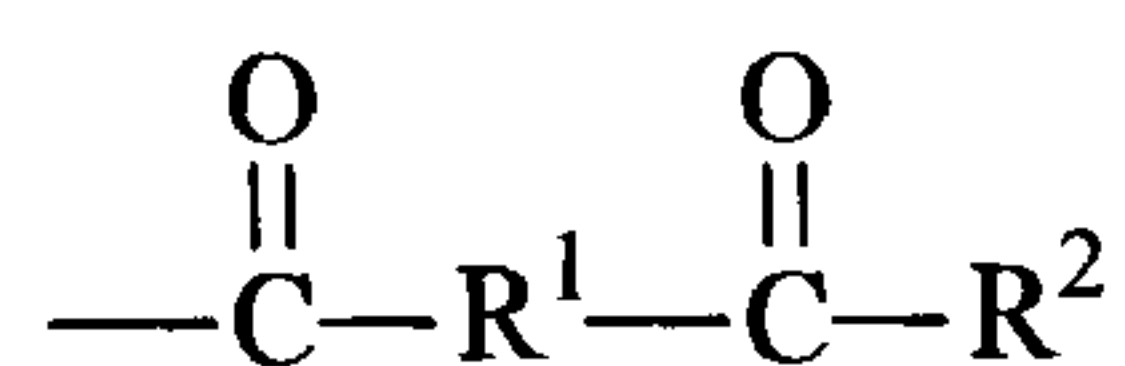
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wherein R¹ is a C1 to C22 alkylene group and R² is a C1 to C22 alkyl group, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been used to neutralize or partially
 5 neutralize the acid-functionality of the alkali-soluble polymer; adding to the stabilized acetoacetyl-functional polymer an ethylenically unsaturated compound distinct from the polymer comprising acetoacetyl functionality; wherein the ethylenically unsaturated compound is a monomer, oligomer, or mixture thereof; and adding a free-radical initiator during or after the preparing step, wherein the free-radical initiator
 10 is added in an amount of at least 0.1 wt-% based on the total weight of the coating composition.

According to a further aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of preparing a coating composition, the method comprising: receiving a polymer prepared by a method comprising: preparing an alkali-soluble polymer in
 15 water, wherein the alkali-soluble polymer may or may not include acetoacetyl-functional groups; in the presence of the alkali-soluble polymer, polymerizing a polymer comprising one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups of the formula:



wherein R¹ is a C1 to C22 alkylene group and R² is a C1 to C22 alkyl
 20 group, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been used to neutralize or partially neutralize the acid-functionality of the alkali-soluble polymer; and adding to the stabilized acetoacetyl-functional polymer an ethylenically unsaturated compound distinct from the polymer comprising acetoacetyl functionality; wherein the ethylenically unsaturated compound is a monomer, oligomer, or mixture thereof; and

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adding a free-radical initiator during or after the preparing step, wherein the free-radical initiator is added in an amount of at least 0.1 wt-% based on the total weight of the coating composition.

According to yet a further aspect of the present invention, there is
5 provided a method of using a coating composition comprising: hardening a coating composition via free-radical initiation, wherein the coating composition comprises: water; a polymer comprising one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups; an acid-functional polymer, which may be the same as or distinct from the polymer comprising acetoacetyl-functional groups, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been
10 used to neutralize or partially neutralize the acid-functionality of the polymer; and an ethylenically unsaturated compound distinct from the acetoacetyl-functional polymer; wherein the ethylenically unsaturated compound is a monomer, oligomer, or mixture thereof.

As used here, a "latex" polymer means a dispersion of polymer particles
15 in water; a latex polymer typically requires a secondary dispersing agent (e.g., a surfactant) for creating a dispersion or emulsion of polymer particles in water.

A "water-dispersible" polymer means the polymer is itself capable of being dispersed into water (i.e., without requiring the use of a separate surfactant) or water can be added to the polymer to form a stable aqueous dispersion
20 (i.e., the dispersion should have at least one month shelf stability at normal storage temperatures). Such water-dispersible polymers can include nonionic or anionic functionality on the polymer, which assist in rendering them water-dispersible. For such polymers, external acids or bases are typically required for anionic stabilization.

Also herein, "a", "an", "the", "at least one", and "one or more" are used
25 interchangeably.

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Also herein, the recitations of numerical ranges by endpoints include all numbers subsumed within that range (e.g., 1 to 5 includes 1, 1.5, 2, 2.75, 3, 3.80, 4, 5, etc.).

Also herein, the terms “comprises” and variations thereof do not have a
5 limiting meaning where these terms appear in the description and claims. Thus, a composition comprising an ethylenically unsaturated compound means that the composition includes one or more of the ethylenically unsaturated compounds.

The words “preferred” and “preferably” refer to embodiments of the invention that may afford certain benefits, under certain circumstances. However,
10 other embodiments may also be preferred, under the same or other circumstances. Furthermore, the recitation of one or more preferred embodiments does not imply that other embodiments are not useful, and is not intended to exclude other embodiments from the scope of the invention.

The above summary of the present invention is not intended to describe
15 each disclosed embodiment or every implementation of the present invention. The

description that follows more particularly exemplifies illustrative embodiments. In several places throughout the application, guidance is provided through lists of examples, which examples can be used in various combinations. In each instance, the recited list serves only as a representative group and should not be interpreted as
 5 an exclusive list.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIVE EMBODIMENTS

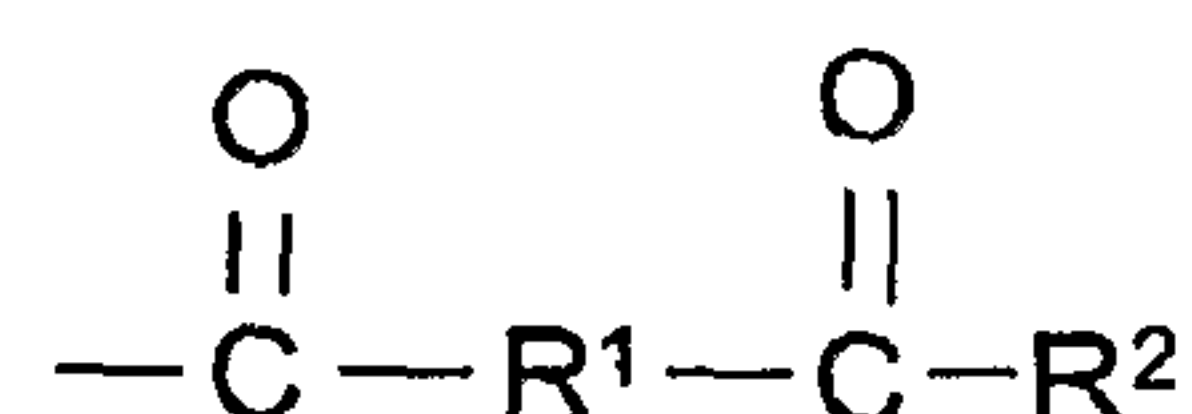
The present invention is directed to aqueous coating compositions (e.g., paints) that include one or more acetoacetyl-functional polymers, coatings prepared
 10 therefrom, and methods of making and using.

The coating compositions may also include one or more acid-functional polymers, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been used to neutralize or partially neutralize the acid-functionality on the polymer(s). In certain embodiments, the composition includes a polymer comprising one or more acetoacetyl functional
 15 groups and an acid-functional polymer, which are the same polymer. In certain embodiments, the composition includes a polymer comprising one or more acetoacetyl functional groups and an acid-functional polymer, which are distinct polymers.

The coating compositions may also include one or more ethylenically
 20 unsaturated compounds (monomers, oligomers, polymers, or mixtures thereof). In some embodiments, the ethylenically unsaturated compounds are (meth)acrylate functional compounds.

Acetoacetyl-functional polymers include one or more of the following acetoacetyl-functional groups:

25



wherein R^1 is a C1 to C22 alkylene group and R^2 is a C1 to C22 alkyl group. Preferably, R^1 is a C1 to C4 alkylene group and R^2 is a C1 to C4 alkyl group, and more preferably, R^1 is methylene ($-\text{CH}_2-$) and R^2 is methyl ($-\text{CH}_3$).

The amount of acetoacetyl-functionality in such a polymer is preferably at least 0.5%, more preferably at least 2.5%, and most preferably at least 5%. The amount of acetoacetyl-functionality in such a polymer is preferably no more than 60%, more preferably no more than 40%, and most preferably no more than 30%.

5 In certain embodiments the invention relates to a radiation-curable coating composition. More particularly, in certain preferred embodiments, the invention relates to an aqueous-based, ultraviolet ("UV") radiation-curable coating composition containing an acetoacetyl-functional polymer and an acrylate or methacrylate functional (preferably, multifunctional) compound. Such coatings can
10 also be cured via visible light, infrared, gamma radiation, electron beam, thermal initiation, or cationic initiation.

In certain embodiments the invention relates to an ultraviolet curable coating composition. More particularly, in certain preferred embodiments, the invention relates to an aqueous-based, ultraviolet ("UV") radiation-curable coating
15 composition containing an acetoacetyl-functional polymer, an ethylenically unsaturated functional compound, and a photoinitiator.

In certain embodiments the invention relates to a radiation-curable coating composition. More particularly, in certain preferred embodiments, the invention relates to an aqueous-based, ultraviolet ("UV") radiation-curable coating
20 composition containing an acetoacetyl-functional polymer and an acid-functional polymer (which may be the same as or distinct from the polymer comprising acetoacetyl functional groups, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been used to neutralize or partially neutralize the acid-functionality on the polymer). Such coatings can also be cured via visible light, infrared, gamma radiation, electron
25 beam, thermal initiation, or cationic initiation.

In certain embodiments the invention relates to an ultraviolet curable coating composition. More particularly, in certain preferred embodiments, the invention relates to an aqueous-based, ultraviolet ("UV") radiation-curable coating composition containing an acetoacetyl-functional polymer, an acid-functional
30 polymer (which may be the same as or distinct from the polymer comprising acetoacetyl functional groups, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been used to

neutralize or partially neutralize the acid-functionality on the polymer), and a photoinitiator.

In certain embodiments the invention relates to a radiation-curable coating composition. More particularly, in certain preferred embodiments, the invention
5 relates to an aqueous-based, ultraviolet ("UV") radiation-curable coating composition containing an acetoacetyl-functional polymer, an acid-functional polymer (which may be the same as or distinct from the polymer comprising acetoacetyl functional groups, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been used to neutralize or partially neutralize the acid-functionality on the polymer), and
10 optionally an acrylate or methacrylate functional (preferably, multifunctional) compound. Such coatings can also be at least partially cured via visible light, electron beam, infrared, gamma radiation, thermal initiation, or cationic initiation.

In certain embodiments the invention relates to an ultraviolet curable coating composition. More particularly, in certain preferred embodiments, the
15 invention relates to an aqueous-based, ultraviolet ("UV") radiation-curable coating composition containing an acetoacetyl-functional polymer, an acid-functional polymer (which may be the same as or distinct from the polymer comprising acetoacetyl functional groups, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been used to neutralize or partially neutralize the acid-functionality on the polymer), optionally an
20 ethylenically unsaturated functional compound, and a photoinitiator.

In certain embodiments, coating compositions of the present invention are advantageous in that they have a relatively low volatile organic content without sacrificing the balance of properties desired for an applied (i.e., dry) coating, such as a paint. Preferably, certain coating compositions have a relatively low volatile
25 organic content (VOC). Preferably, the coating compositions include no more than 10 weight percent (wt-%) volatile organic compounds, based on the total weight of the composition. More preferably, the coating compositions of the present invention include no more than 7 wt-% volatile organic compounds. Volatile organic compounds are defined in U.S. Pat. No. 6,048,471 (Henry) and in the U.S. Federal
30 Register: June 16, 1995, volume 60, number 111.

Coating compositions of the present invention preferably include at least 40 wt-% water, based on the total weight of the composition. Coating compositions of

the present invention preferably include no more than 90 wt-% water, and more preferably no more than 70 wt-% water, based on the total weight of the composition.

Polymers suitable for the coating compositions of the present invention are preferably either water-dispersible or latex polymers. Such polymers are well-known in the coating industry and include a wide variety of polymers.

In certain embodiments, suitable polymers include polyurethanes, epoxies, polyamides, chlorinated polyolefins, acrylics, oil-modified polymers, polyesters, and mixtures or copolymers thereof, for example. Such polymers are readily synthesized and made to include acetoacetyl-functionality using conventional techniques.

Acetoacetyl-functionality may be incorporated into the polymer through the use of: acetoacetoxyethyl acrylate, acetoacetoxypropyl methacrylate, allyl acetoacetate, acetoacetoxybutyl methacrylate, 2,3-di(acetoacetoxy)propyl methacrylate, 2-(acetoacetoxy) ethyl methacrylate, t-butyl acetoacetate, diketene, and the like, or combinations thereof. In general, any polymerizable hydroxy functional or other active hydrogen containing monomer can be converted to the corresponding acetoacetyl-functional monomer by reaction with diketene or other suitable acetoacetylating agent (see, e.g., Comparison of Methods for the Preparation of Acetoacetylated Coating Resins, Witzeman, J. S.; Dell Nottingham, W.; Del Rector, F. J. Coatings Technology; Vol. 62, 1990, 101 (and references contained therein)). In preferred coating compositions, the acetoacetyl-functional group is incorporated into the polymer via 2-(acetoacetoxy) ethyl methacrylate, t-butyl acetoacetate, diketene, or combinations thereof.

In certain embodiments, the acetoacetyl-functional polymer of the composition is a latex polymer. Preferably, the acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer particles have an average particle size of less than 75 nanometers (nm).

In certain embodiments, the acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer is preferably prepared through chain-growth polymerization, using, for example, 2-(acetoacetoxy) ethylmethacrylate (AAEM) and one or more ethylenically unsaturated monomers. Examples of ethylenically unsaturated monomers are selected from the group consisting of acrylic acid, methacrylic acid, methyl acrylate, ethyl acrylate, propyl acrylate, butyl acrylate, 2-ethylhexyl acrylate, methyl methacrylate, ethyl

methacrylate, propyl methacrylate, butyl methacrylate, 2-ethylhexyl methacrylate, hydroxyethyl acrylate, hydroxyethyl methacrylate, hydroxybutyl acrylate, hydroxybutyl methacrylate, glycidyl methacrylate, 4-hydroxybutyl acrylate glycidylether, acrylamide, methylacrylamide, diacetone acrylamide, 5 dimethylaminomethacrylate, diethylaminemethacrylate, N-hydroxy(meth)acrylamide, styrene, α -methyl styrene, vinyl toluene, vinyl acetate, vinyl propionate, allyl methacrylate, and mixtures thereof.

Preferably, the ethylenically unsaturated monomers used in preparing the acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer include styrene. In certain embodiments, the 10 acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer includes no greater than 75 percent by weight (wt-%) styrene, and in other embodiments, no greater than 50 wt-%, based on the total weight of the acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer. In certain embodiments, the level of styrene is no less than 7.5 wt-%, in other embodiments, no less than 20 wt-%, based on the total weight of the acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer.

15 The latex polymers are typically stabilized by one or more nonionic or anionic emulsifiers (i.e., surfactants), used either alone or together. Examples of suitable nonionic emulsifiers include tert-octylphenoxyethylpoly(39)-ethoxyethanol, dodecyloxypoly(10)ethoxyethanol, nonylphenoxyethyl-poly(40)ethoxyethanol, polyethylene glycol 2000 monooleate, ethoxylated castor oil, fluorinated alkyl esters and alkoxylates, polyoxyethylene (20) sorbitan monolaurate, sucrose monococoate, 20 di(2-butyl)phenoxypoly(20)ethoxyethanol, hydroxyethylcellulosepolybutyl acrylate graft copolymer, dimethyl silicone polyalkylene oxide graft copolymer, poly(ethylene oxide)poly(butyl acrylate) block copolymer, block copolymers of propylene oxide and ethylene oxide, 2,4,7,9-tetramethyl-5-decyne-4,7-diol 25 ethoxylated with 30 moles of ethylene oxide, N-polyoxyethylene(20)lauramide, N-lauryl-N-polyoxyethylene(3)amine, and poly(10)ethylene glycol dodecyl thioether. Examples of suitable anionic emulsifiers include sodium lauryl sulfate, sodium dodecylbenzenesulfonate, potassium stearate, sodium dioctyl sulfosuccinate, sodium dodecyldiphenyloxide disulfonate, nonylphenoxyethylpoly(1)ethoxyethyl sulfate 30 ammonium salt, sodium styrene sulfonate, sodium dodecyl allyl sulfosuccinate, linseed oil fatty acid, sodium or ammonium salts of phosphate esters of ethoxylated nonylphenol, sodium octoxynol-3-sulfonate, sodium cocoyl sarcocinate, sodium 1-

alkoxy-2-hydroxypropyl sulfonate, sodium alpha-olefin (C₁₄-C₁₆) sulfonate, sulfates of hydroxyalkanols, tetrasodium N-(1,2-dicarboxy ethyl)-N-octadecylsulfosuccinamate, disodium N-octadecylsulfosuccinamate, disodium alkylamido polyethoxy sulfosuccinate, disodium ethoxylated nonylphenol half ester
5 of sulfosuccinic acid and the sodium salt of tert-octylphenoxyethoxypoly(39)ethoxyethyl sulfate. Various combinations of emulsifiers can be used, if desired.

Latex polymers, particularly ones having some acidic functionality, are sometimes further stabilized by neutralization using ammonia or an amine. It has
10 been discovered that neutralization or partial neutralization of a waterborne acetoacetyl-functional polymer with a nitrogen-containing base (e.g., ammonia or an amine) can in some situations lead to an undesirable luminescence appearance in a clear coating. Although not intended to be limiting, it is believed that this appearance may be caused by the formation of a tautomeric enol configuration or
15 enamine configuration. It has been discovered that use of a nitrogen-free base (e.g., an inorganic metal base such as KOH, Ca(OH)₂, NaOH, LiOH, etc.) solves or lessens this problem for these types of coatings. Other such nitrogen-free bases may also be employed in this manner.

The latex polymer may also be stabilized with an alkali-soluble polymer,
20 which may or may not contain acetoacetyl-functionality. Examples of suitable alkali-soluble support polymers are JONCRYL 675 and JONCRYL 678.

One suitable process of preparing alkali soluble supported polymers is outlined in US Patent 5,962,571. In addition, alkali-soluble polymers may be prepared by making a polymer with acrylic or methacrylic acid or other
25 polymerizable acid monomer (usually greater than 7%) and solubilizing the polymer by addition of ammonia or other base. For coatings containing acetoacetyl-functional polymers (particularly clear coatings, more particularly those that are substantially non-luminescing), the use of a nitrogen-free base (e.g., an inorganic metal base such as KOH, Ca(OH)₂, NaOH, LiOH, etc.) is preferred.

30 One presently preferred embodiment comprises an acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer that is stabilized with an alkali soluble support polymer that has been neutralized or partially neutralized using a suitable base (e.g., KOH, Ca(OH)₂,

NaOH, LiOH, etc.) and with optional surfactants. In this embodiment, the alkali support polymer may or may not contain acetoacetyl-functionality, and acetoacetyl-functionality is incorporated into the latex polymer via the use of a suitable molecule such as 2-(acetoacetoxy) ethylacrylate or 2-(acetoacetoxy) ethylmethacrylate (AAEM).

If desired, the aforementioned stabilized acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer may be mixed with one or more other optional neutralized or partially neutralized polymers, and such other optional neutralized or partially neutralized polymers may be neutralized with nitrogen-containing bases and/or nitrogen-free bases.

While not intending to be bound by theory, it is theorized that in such systems the stabilized acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer will not significantly coalesce with the other optional neutralized or partially neutralized polymer prior to application and significant amounts of any nitrogen-containing base that may be present in the other polymer will not readily migrate to the stabilized acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer and cause significant formation of a tautomeric enol configuration or enamine configuration.

Another suitable embodiment comprises an acid-functional, acetoacetyl-functional polyurethane dispersion polymer that has been neutralized or partially neutralized using a suitable base (e.g., KOH, $\text{Ca}(\text{OH})_2$, NaOH, LiOH, etc.).

Another suitable embodiment comprises an acid-functional, acetoacetyl-functional polyester polymer that has been neutralized or partially neutralized using a suitable base (e.g., KOH, $\text{Ca}(\text{OH})_2$, NaOH, LiOH, etc.).

A water-soluble free radical initiator is typically used in the chain growth polymerization of a latex polymer. Suitable water-soluble free radical initiators include hydrogen peroxide, tert-butyl peroxide, alkali metal persulfates such as sodium, potassium and lithium persulfate, ammonium persulfate, and mixtures of such initiators with a reducing agent. Reducing agents include sulfites, such as alkali metal metabisulfite, hydrosulfite, and hyposulfite, sodium formaldehyde sulfoxylate, and reducing sugars such as ascorbic acid and isoascorbic acid. The amount of initiator is preferably from 0.01 wt-% to 3 wt-%, based on the total amount of monomer. In a redox system the amount of reducing agent is preferably

from 0.01 wt-% to 3 wt-%, based on the total amount of monomer. The temperature may be in the range of 10°C to 100°C.

In certain embodiments, the acetoacetyl-functional polymer of the composition is a water dispersible polymer. Preferred acetoacetyl-functional water dispersible polymers include polyesters, polyurethanes, and oil-modified polymers such as alkyds. Such polymers may be prepared by any method known in the art.

An example of a method of preparing a water-dispersible polyester includes reacting one or more polybasic acids with one or more polyols to give a polymer with excess hydroxyl functionality. The resulting polyester could be further reacted with either t-butyl acetoacetate, or diketene to incorporate acetoacetyl-functionality onto the polymer, and with a suitable anhydride such as trimellitic anhydride to render the polyester acid functional. The resulting acid functionality may then be neutralized with a neutralizing base to render the polyester water dispersible. For coatings containing acetoacetyl-functional polymers (particularly clear coatings, more particularly those that are substantially non-luminescing), the use of a nitrogen-free base (e.g., KOH, Ca(OH)₂, NaOH, LiOH, etc.) is preferred.

An example of a method of preparing a water-dispersible alkyd includes reacting one or more of the alcoholysis product of an oil and polyol, fatty acids, monoglycerides or diglycerides and one or more polybasic acids with one or more polyols to give a polymer with excess hydroxyl functionality. The resulting alkyd could be further reacted with either t-butyl acetoacetate, or diketene to incorporate acetoacetyl-functionality onto the polymer, and with a suitable anhydride such as trimellitic anhydride to render the alkyd acid functional. The resulting acid functionality may then be neutralized with a neutralizing base to render the alkyd water dispersible. For coatings containing acetoacetyl-functional polymers (particularly clear coatings, more particularly those that are substantially non-luminescing), the use of a nitrogen-free base (e.g., KOH, Ca(OH)₂, NaOH, LiOH, etc.) is preferred.

Suitable oils and/or fatty acids derived therefrom include compounds such as, for example, linseed oil, safflower oil, tall oil, cotton seed, ground nut oil, tung oil, wood oil, ricinene oil or, preferably, sunflower oil, soya oil, castor oil, dehydrated castor oil, and the like. These oils or fatty acids can be used alone or as a mixture of

one or more of the oils or fatty acids. Preferred fatty acids are soya fatty acids, dehydrated castor fatty acids, linolenic fatty acids, ricinoleic fatty acids, and linoleic fatty acids.

Suitable polyols useful in preparing a polyester or alkyd include compounds
5 such as, for example, aliphatic, cycloaliphatic and/or araliphatic alcohols having 1 to 6, preferably 1 to 4, hydroxy groups attached to nonaromatic or aromatic carbon atoms. Examples of suitable polyols include, ethylene glycol, 1,2-propanediol, 1,3-propanediol, 1,2-butanediol, 1,3-butanediol, 1,4-butanediol, 2-ethyl-1,3-propanediol, 2-methylpropanediol, 2-butyl-2-ethylpropanediol, 2-ethyl-1,3-hexanediol, 1,3
10 neopentyl glycol, 2,2-dimethyl-1,3-pentanediol, 1,6 hexanediol, 1,2- and 1,4-cyclohexanediol, bisphenol A, 1,2- and 1,4-bis(hydroxymethyl)cyclohexane, bis(4-hydroxycyclohexyl)methane, adipic acid bis-(ethylene glycol ester), ether alcohols, such as diethylene glycol and triethylene glycol, dipropylene glycol, perhydrogenated bisphenols, 1,2,4-butanetriol, 1,2,6-hexanetriol, trimethylolpropane,
15 trimethylolpropane, trimethylolhexane, glycerol, pentaerythritol, dipentaerythritol, mannitol and sorbitol, and also chain-terminating monoalcohols having 1 to 8 carbon atoms such as propanol, butanol, cyclohexanol, benzyl alcohol, hydroxypivalic acid, and mixtures thereof.

The polybasic acids useful in preparing polyesters or alkyds include
20 compounds such as, for example, aliphatic, cycloaliphatic saturated or unsaturated and/or aromatic polybasic carboxylic acids, such as, for example, dicarboxylic, tricarboxylic and tetracarboxylic acids. These compounds can be used alone or as a mixture of one or more polybasic acids. Suitable examples of polybasic acids include, for example, phthalic acid, isophthalic acid, adipic acid, terephthalic acid,
25 tetrahydrophthalic acid, hexahydrophthalic acid, endomethylenetetrahydrophthalic acid, succinic acid, glutaric acid, sebacic acid, azelaic acid, trimellitic acid, pyromellitic acid, fumaric and maleic acid and the like, or mixtures thereof.

Polybasic acids, as used herein, are broadly defined to include anhydrides of the polybasic acids such as, for example, maleic anhydride, phthalic anhydride,
30 succinic anhydride, tetrahydrophthalic anhydride, hexahydrophthalic anhydride, trimellitic anhydride, or mixtures thereof. These compounds can be used alone or as a mixture of one or more polybasic acids.

Suitable neutralizing bases to render the polyester or alkyd water dispersible include inorganic bases such as sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, lithium hydroxide, calcium hydroxide, ammonia, triethylamine, and dimethyl ethanol amine. For coatings containing acetoacetyl-functional polymers (particularly clear coatings, more particularly those that are substantially non-luminescing), the use of a nitrogen-free base (e.g., KOH, Ca(OH)₂, NaOH, LiOH, etc.) is preferred.

In addition to polymers having acetoacetyl-functionality, coating compositions of the present invention also include ethylenically unsaturated compounds. Preferably, such compounds are multifunctional (i.e., include two or more ethylenically unsaturated groups), which makes them suitable crosslinkable diluents. Such compounds may be monomers, oligomers, polymers, or mixtures thereof.

Preferred such ethylenically unsaturated compounds include (meth)acrylate functionality (wherein "(meth)acrylate" refers to an acrylate and a methacrylate), vinyl functionality, vinyl ether functionality, (meth)allyl ether functionality (wherein (meth)allyl ether refers to an allyl ether and a methallyl ether), or mixtures thereof.

Coating compositions of the present invention can include one or more different ethylenically unsaturated compounds, preferably one or more (meth)acrylate monomers. Preferably, the (meth)acrylate monomers have two or more (meth)acrylate groups (i.e., they are multifunctional). The (meth)acrylate functional groups of the (meth)acrylate monomers are bonded to core structural groups, which may be based on a wide variety of organic structures including dipropylene glycol, tripropylene glycol, isobornyl alcohol, isodecyl alcohol, phenoxyethyl alcohol, trishydroxyethyl isocyanurate, trimethylolpropane ethoxylate, hexanediol, ethoxylated and propoxylated neopentyl glycol, oxyethylated phenol, polyethylene glycol, bisphenol ethoxylate, neopentyl glycol propoxylate, trimethylolpropane, propoxylated glycerol, di-trimethylolpropane, pentaerythritol, tetrahydrofurfuryl alcohol, beta-carboxyethyl alcohol, substituted derivatives of the above, combinations of the above, and the like.

Examples of suitable (meth)acrylate monomers include isobornyl (meth)acrylate, isodecyl (meth)acrylate, phenoxyethyl (meth)acrylate, trimethylolpropane tri(meth)acrylate, trimethylolpropane ethoxylate

tri(meth)acrylate, dipropylene glycol di(meth)acrylate, tripropylene glycol di(meth)acrylate, hexanediol di(meth)acrylate, tetrahydrofurfuryl (meth)acrylate, beta-carboxyethyl (meth)acrylate, bisphenol A ethoxylate di(meth)acrylate, ethoxylated and propoxylated neopentyl glycol di(meth)acrylates, di-
5 (trimethylolpropane tetra (meth)acrylate), pentaerythritol tri(meth)acrylate, pentaerythritol tetra(meth)acrylate, propoxylated glycerol tri(meth)acrylate, or mixtures thereof.

Another example of a suitable ethylenically unsaturated compound is an allyl ether. Preferably, the allyl ether functional groups of the allyl ether monomers are
10 bonded to a core structural group which is based on a wide variety of polyhydric alcohols. Suitable polyhydric alcohols include neopentyl glycol, trimethylolpropane, ethylene glycol, propylene glycol, butylene glycol, diethylene glycol, trimethylene glycol, triethylene glycol, trimethylolethane, pentaerythritol, glycerol, diglycerol, 1,4-butanediol, 1,6-hexanediol, 1,4-cyclohexanedimethanol, and the like. Various
15 mixtures of such alcohols can be used, if desired.

Examples of suitable allyl ether monomers include hydroxyethyl allyl ether, hydroxypropyl allyl ether, trimethylolpropane monoallyl ether, trimethylolpropane diallyl ether, trimethylolethane monoallyl ether, trimethylolethane diallyl ether, glycerol monoallyl ether, glycerol diallyl ether, pentaerythritol monoallyl ether,
20 pentaerythritol diallyl ether, pentaerythritol triallyl ether, 1,2,6-hexanetriol monoallyl ether, 1,2,6-hexanetriol diallyl ether, and the like. Propoxylated and ethoxylated forms of these compounds are also suitable.

Another example of a suitable ethylenically unsaturated compound is a vinyl ether. Examples of suitable vinyl ether monomers include 4-hydroxybutyl vinyl ether, 1,4-cyclohexanedimethanol monovinyl ether, 1,4-cyclohexanedimethanol
25 divinyl ether, ethylene glycol monovinyl ether, ethylene glycol divinyl ether, diethylene glycol monovinyl ether, diethylene glycol divinyl ether, triethylene glycol divinyl ether, and the like. Propoxylated and ethoxylated forms of these compounds are also suitable.

30 The ethylenically unsaturated compounds may be used in various combinations and may also provide a crosslinkable diluent function to the coating compositions.

Coating compositions of the present invention preferably include an acetoacetyl-functional polymer in an amount of at least 10 wt-%, more preferably at least 30 wt-%, even more preferably at least 45 wt-%, and even more preferably at least 55 wt-%, based on the combined weight of any monomers, oligomers, and polymers in the composition (e.g., the ethylenically unsaturated compound and the acetoacetyl-functional polymer component of the composition). Coating compositions of the present invention preferably include an acetoacetyl-functional polymer in an amount of no more than 95 wt-%, more preferably no more than 90 wt-%, and even more preferably no more than 85 wt-%, based on the combined weight of any monomers, oligomers, and polymers in the composition (e.g., the ethylenically unsaturated compound and the acetoacetyl-functional polymer component of the composition).

Thus, certain preferred coating compositions include 30 wt-% to 95 wt-% acetoacetyl-functional polymer, and in certain more preferred compositions include 55 wt-% to 85 wt-% acetoacetyl-functional polymer, based on the combined weight of any monomers, oligomers, and polymers in the composition (e.g., the ethylenically unsaturated compound and the acetoacetyl-functional polymer component of the composition).

Coating compositions of the present invention preferably include an ethylenically unsaturated compound in an amount of at least 5 wt-%, more preferably in an amount of at least 7.5 wt-%, and even more preferably in an amount of at least 10 wt-%, based on the combined weight of the ethylenically unsaturated compound and the acetoacetyl-functional polymer component of the composition. Coating compositions of the present invention preferably include an ethylenically unsaturated compound in an amount of no more than 70 wt-%, more preferably in an amount of no more than 50 wt-%, and even more preferably in an amount of no more than 40 wt-%, based on the combined weight of the ethylenically unsaturated compound and the acetoacetyl-functional polymer component of the composition.

Other components of the coating compositions of the present invention include those typically used in paint formulations, such as pigments, fillers, thickeners, biocides, mildewcides, surfactants, dispersants, defoamers, and the like.

Suitable additives for use in coating compositions of the present invention are described in Koleske et al., Paint and Coatings Industry, April, 2003, pages 12-86.

In particular, compositions including a latex polymer also include a dispersing agent, such as a nonionic or anionic surfactant, as described above. Such surfactants not only create a dispersion or emulsion of polymer particles in water, but assist incorporation of the ethylenically unsaturated compound.

Coating compositions of the present invention can include one or more initiators. Examples of suitable initiators include photoinitiators, thermal initiators, catalysts for auto-oxidative cure (e.g., manganese catalysts).

Certain embodiments of the present invention include polymers that are curable by UV or visible light. These coating compositions typically include a free-radical initiator, particularly a photoinitiator that induces the curing reaction upon exposure to light. The photoinitiator is preferably present in an amount of at least 0.1 wt-%, based on the total weight of the coating composition. The photoinitiator is preferably present in an amount of no greater than 10 wt-%, based on the total weight of the coating composition.

Among photoinitiators suitable for use in the present invention with resins having (meth)acrylate or allyl ether functional groups are alpha-cleavage type photoinitiators and hydrogen abstraction-type photoinitiators. The photoinitiator may include other agents such as a coinitiator or photoinitiator synergist that aid the photochemical initiation reaction. Suitable cleavage type photoinitiators include alpha,alpha-diethoxyacetophenone (DEAP), dimethoxyphenylacetophenoneTM (commercially available under the trade designation IRGACURE 651 from Ciba Corp., Ardsley, NY), hydroxycyclo-hexylphenylketone (commercially available under the trade designation IRGACURE 184 from Ciba Corp.), 2-hydroxy-2-methyl-1-phenylpropan-1-one (commercially available under the trade designation DAROCUR 1173 from Ciba Corp.), a 25:75 blend of bis-(2,6-dimethoxybenzoyl)-2,4,4-trimethylpentyl phosphine oxide and 2-hydroxy-2-methyl-1-phenylpropan-1-one (commercially available under the trade designation IRGACURE 1700 from Ciba Corp.), a 50:50 blend of 2-hydroxy-2-methyl-1-phenylpropan-1-one and 2,4,6-trimethylbenzoyl-diphenylphosphine oxide (TPO, commercially available under the trade designation DAROCUR 4265 from Ciba Corp.), phosphine oxide, 2,4,6-

trimethyl benzoyl (commercially available under the trade name IRGACURE 819TM
 and IRGACURE 819DWTM from Ciba Corp.), 2,4,6-trimethylbenzoyl-
 diphenylphosphine oxide (commercially available under the trade designation
 LUCIRINTM from BASF Corp., Mount Olive, NJ), and a mixture of 70% oligo 2-
 5 hydroxy-2-methyl-4-(1-methylvinyl)phenylpropan-1-one and 30% 2-hydroxy-2-
 methyl-1-phenylpropan-1-one) (commercially available under the trade designation
 KIP 100 from Sartomer, Exton, PA). Suitable hydrogen abstraction-type
 photoinitiators include benzophenone, substituted benzophenones (such as that
 commercially available under the trade designation ESCACURE TZTTM from Fratelli-
 10 Lamberti, sold by Sartomer, Exton, PA), and other diaryl ketones such as xanthenes,
 thioxanthenes, Michler's ketone, benzil, quinones, and substituted derivatives of all
 of the above. Preferred photoinitiators include DAROCUR 1173TM, KIP 100TM,
 benzophenoneTM, IRGACURE 189TM, IRGACURE 819DWTM, LUCERINTM, and
 IRGACURE 184TM. A particularly preferred initiator mixture is commercially
 15 available under the trade designation IRGACURE 500TM from Ciba Corp., which is a
 mixture of IRGACURE 184TM and benzophenone, in a 1:1 ratio. This is a good
 example of a mixture of an alpha-cleavage type photoinitiator and a hydrogen
 abstraction-type photoinitiator. Other mixtures of photoinitiators may also be used
 in the coating compositions of the present invention. Camphorquinone is one
 20 example of a suitable photoinitiator for curing a coating composition with visible
 light.

A coating composition of the present invention can also include a coinitiator
 or photoinitiator synergist. The coinitiators can be tertiary aliphatic amines (such as
 methyl diethanol amine and triethanol amine), aromatic amines (such as
 25 amylparadimethylaminobenzoate, 2-n-butoxyethyl-4-(dimethylamino) benzoate, 2-
 (dimethylamino)ethylbenzoate, ethyl-4-(dimethylamino)benzoate, and 2-ethylhexyl-
 4-(dimethylamino)benzoate, (meth)acrylated amines (such as those commercially
 available under the trade designations EBECRYL 7100TM and UVECRYL P104TM and
 P115, all from UCB RadCure Specialties, Smyrna, GA), and amino-functional
 30 acrylate or methacrylate resin or oligomer blends (such as those commercially
 available under the trade designations EBECRYL 3600TM or EBECRYL 3703TM, both

from UCB RadCure Specialties). Combinations of the above categories of compounds may also be used.

Preferred photoinitiators include benzophenone, 4-methylbenzophenone, benzoyl benzoate, phenylacetophenones, 2,2-dimethoxy-2-phenylacetophenone, 5 alpha,alpha-diethoxyacetophenone, hydroxycyclo-hexylphenylketone, 2-hydroxy-2-methyl-1-phenylpropan-1-one, bis-(2,6-dimethoxybenzoyl)-2,4,4-trimethylpentyl phosphine oxide, 2-hydroxy-2-methyl-1-phenylpropan-1-one, 2-hydroxy-2-methyl-1-phenylpropan-1-one, 2,4,6-trimethylbenzoyl-diphenylphosphine oxide, phosphine oxide, 2,4,6-trimethyl benzoyl, and combinations thereof.

10 Preferred compositions include a free radical initiator that is a hydrogen abstraction-type photoinitiator. Preferably, the hydrogen abstraction-type photoinitiator is benzophenone or a 4-methylbenzophenone. Such compositions are at least partially curable by ultraviolet light.

Although not intended to be limiting, it is believed that the acetoacetyl- 15 functional polymer likely participates in a free radical UV cure mechanism through hydrogen abstraction of the -C(O)-CH₂-C(O)- hydrogens through a benzophenone based initiation. If it occurs, this preferably takes place upon exposure to ultraviolet or visible light between 200 nm and 800 nm, and more preferably in the ultraviolet range of 200 nm to 400 nm. Alternatively, another possible mechanism is through a 20 free radical crosslink in the double bond of a tautomeric enol configuration or enamine configuration.

It has been discovered that neutralization or partial neutralization of a waterborne acetoacetyl-functional polymer with a nitrogen-containing base (e.g., ammonia or an amine) can in some situations lead to an undesirable luminescence 25 appearance in a clear coating. Although not intended to be limiting, it is believed that this appearance may be caused by the formation of a tautomeric enol configuration or enamine configuration. We have discovered that use of a nitrogen-free base (e.g., KOH, Ca(OH)₂, NaOH, LiOH, etc.) solves or lessens this problem for these types of coatings. Other such bases may also be employed in this manner.

30 The amount of hydrogen abstraction-type photoinitiator in such a composition is preferably at least 0.1 wt-%, more preferably at least 0.2 wt-%, and even more preferably at least 0.4 wt-%, based upon the total weight of the

composition. The amount of hydrogen abstraction-type photoinitiator in such a composition is preferably no more than 4 wt-%, more preferably no more than 3 wt-%, and even more preferably no more than 2 wt-%, based upon the total weight of the composition.

5 Coating compositions having resins with vinyl ether functional groups can be cured by UV or visible light using cationic-generating photoinitiators. Examples of suitable cationic-generating photoinitiators include super acid-generating photoinitiators, such as triarylsulfonium salts. One useful triarylsulfonium salt is triphenyl sulfonium hexafluorophosphate.

10 Many coating compositions that may be cured by UV or visible light may also be cured with an electron beam. Techniques and devices for curing a coating composition using an electron beam are known in the art. These techniques do not require a photoinitiator for electron beam cure of the coating.

 Coating compositions that include compounds with (meth)acrylate and/or
15 allyl functional groups may also be thermally cured using a suitable initiator. The thermal initiator typically facilitates the curing process by a free radical mechanism and typically includes a peroxide or azo compound. Peroxide compounds suitable for use as initiators in the coating compositions of the present invention include t-butyl perbenzoate, t-amyl perbenzoate, cumene hydroperoxide, t-amyl peroctoate,
20 methyl ethyl ketone peroxide, benzoyl peroxide, cyclohexanone peroxide, 2,4-pentanedione peroxide, di-t-butyl peroxide, t-butyl hydroperoxide, and di-(2-ethylhexyl)-peroxydicarbonate. Suitable azo compounds which may be employed as an initiator in the present compositions include 2,2-azo bis-(2,4-dimethylpentane-nitrile), 2,2-azo bis-(2-methylbutanenitrile), and 2,2-azo bis-(2-
25 methylpropanenitrile).

 For coating compositions having a mixture of (meth)acrylate, allyl ether, and vinyl ether functional groups, a combination of curing procedures may be used. For example, a coating composition having both (meth)acrylate and vinyl ether functional groups typically includes an alpha-cleavage type and/or hydrogen
30 abstraction type photoinitiator for the (meth)acrylate groups and a cationic-generating photoinitiator for the vinyl ether groups.

Other methods for curing the coating compositions of the invention can be used alone or in combination with methods described hereinabove. Supplemental curing methods include heat cure, chemical cure, anaerobic cure, moisture cure, oxidative cure, and the like. Each method of cure requires a corresponding curing initiator or curing agent, which is included in the composition. For example, thermal cure can be induced by peroxides, metal drier packages can induce an oxidative cure, multifunctional amines (for example isophorone diamine) can effect a chemical crosslinking cure through Michael addition of amine groups onto acrylate reactive unsaturated groups. If these additional initiators are present in the coating composition they are preferably present in an amount of at least 0.1 wt-%, based on the weight of the coating composition. Preferably, they are present in an amount of no greater than 12 wt-%, based on the weight of the coating composition. Means for effecting cures by such methods are known to those of skill in the art or can be determined using standard methods.

Certain coating compositions of the present invention may also include one or more of a group of ingredients that can be called performance enhancing additives. Typical performance enhancing additives that may be employed include surface active agents, pigments, colorants, dyes, surfactants, thickeners, heat stabilizers, leveling agents, anti-cratering agents, curing indicators, plasticizers, fillers, sedimentation inhibitors, ultraviolet-light absorbers, optical brighteners, and the like to modify properties.

Coating compositions may include a surface-active agent that modifies the interaction of the curable coating composition with the substrate, in particular, the agent can modify the ability of the composition to wet a substrate. Surface active agents may have other properties as well. For example, surface active agents may also include leveling, defoaming, or flow agents, and the like. The surface active agent affects qualities of the curable coating composition including how the coating composition is handled, how it spreads across the surface of the substrate, and how it bonds to the substrate. If it is used, the surface active agent is preferably present in an amount of no greater than 5 wt-%, based on the total weight of the coating composition.

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Surface active agents have also been found to assist incorporation as well as assist coating formulation. Surface active agents suitable for use in coating compositions are known to those of skill in the art or can be determined using standard methods. Exemplary surface active agents include polydimethylsiloxane surface active agents (such as those commercially available under the trade designations SILWET L-760TM and SILWET L-7622TM from OSI Specialties, South Charleston, WV, or BYK 306TM, BYK 333TM, and BYK 346TM from Byk-Chemie, Wallingford, Connecticut) and fluorinated surface active agents (such as that commercially available as FLUORAD FC-430TM from 3M Co., St. Paul, MN). The surface active agents may include a defoamer. Suitable defoamers include polysiloxane defoamers (such as a methylalkylpolysiloxane like that commercially available under the trade designation BYK 077TM or BYK 500TM from Byk-Chemie) or polymeric defoamers (such as that commercially available under the trade designation BYK 051TM from Byk-Chemie).

For some applications, a coating that is opaque, colored, pigmented or has other visual characteristics is desired. Agents to provide such properties can also be included in coating compositions of the present invention. Pigments for use with the present invention are known in the art. Suitable pigments include titanium dioxide white, carbon black, lampblack, black iron oxide, red iron oxide, yellow iron oxide, brown iron oxide (a blend of red and yellow oxide with black), phthalocyanine green, phthalocyanine blue, organic reds (such as naphthol red, quinacridone red and toulidine red), quinacridone magenta, quinacridone violet, DNA orange, and/or organic yellows (such as Hansa yellow). The composition can also include a gloss control additive or an optical brightener, such as that commercially available under the trade designation UVITEX OBTM from Ciba-Geigy.

In certain embodiments it is advantageous to include fillers or inert ingredients in the coating composition. Fillers and inert ingredients include, for example, clay, glass beads, calcium carbonate, talc, silicas, organic fillers, and the like. Fillers extend, lower the cost of, alter the appearance of, or provide desirable characteristics to the composition before and after curing. Suitable fillers are known to those of skill in the art or can be determined using standard methods. Fillers or inert ingredients are preferably present in an amount of at least 0.1 wt-%, based on

the total weight of the coating composition. Fillers or inert ingredients are preferably present in an amount of no greater than 40 wt-%, based on the total weight of the coating composition.

The invention may also include other ingredients that modify properties of the curable coating composition as it is stored, handled, or applied, and at other or subsequent stages. Waxes, flattening agents, mar and abrasion additives, and other similar performance enhancing additives may be employed in this invention as required in amounts effective to upgrade the performance of the cured coating and the coating composition. Desirable performance characteristics of the coating include chemical resistance, abrasion resistance, hardness, gloss, reflectivity, appearance, or combinations of these characteristics, and other similar characteristics.

The coating compositions of the present invention may be applied to a variety of substrates including wood, cement, cement fiber board, wood-plastic composites, tile, metal, plastic, glass, optical fibers, and fiberglass. Coating compositions can be applied to a substrate by a variety of methods known to those skilled in the art. Such methods include spraying, painting, rollcoating, brushing, fan coating, curtain coating, spreading, air knife coating, die-coating, vacuum coating, spin coating, electrodeposition, and dipping.

The thickness of the coatings will vary with the application. Typically, the coatings will have a thickness of 0.1 mil to 20 mils (0.00025 centimeter (cm) to 0.0508 cm), however, thicker or thinner coatings are also contemplated depending on, for example, the desired coating properties.

The present invention also provides methods for coating that involve applying a coating composition to a substrate and allowing the coating composition to harden (e.g., by exposing the coating composition to radiation such as ultraviolet or visible light). The present invention also provides coatings prepared or preparable from the coating compositions described herein. For example, a coating of the present invention is preparable by a method that involves applying a coating composition of the present invention to a substrate and allowing the coating composition to harden (e.g., by exposing the coating composition to radiation such as ultraviolet or visible light).

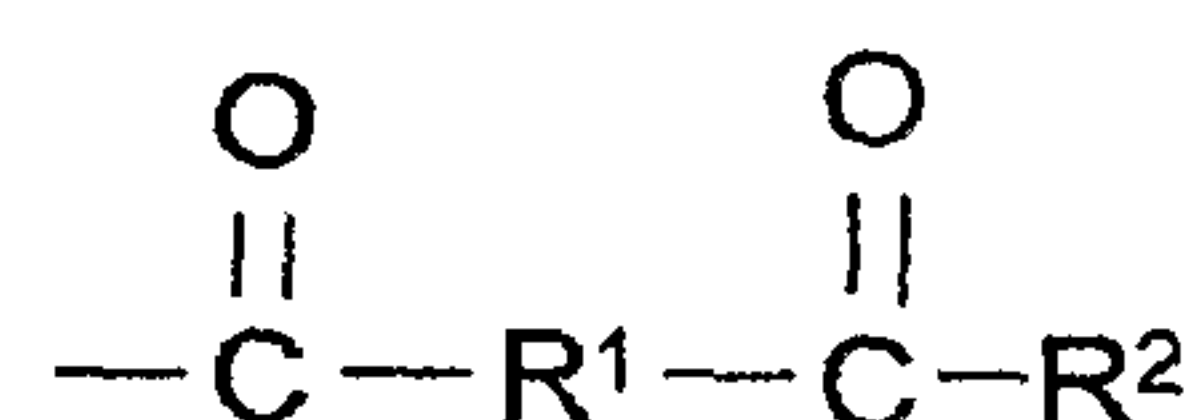
Preferred coatings are cured by exposing the coating to radiation having a wavelength in the range of 10^{-3} nm to 800 nm. More preferably, coating compositions of the present invention are exposed to ultraviolet or visible light in the range of 200 nm to 800 nm. Coating compositions of this invention may also be
 5 cured by thermal means or other forms of radiation such as, for example, electron beam.

Preferred coatings, which are designed to be cured by ultraviolet or visible light, are preferably exposed to 100 MJoules/cm² to 15,000 MJoules/cm², more preferably exposed to 100 MJoules/cm² to 5000 MJoules/cm², even more preferably
 10 exposed to 300 MJoules/cm² to 2000 MJoules/cm², and even more preferably exposed to 500 MJoules/cm² to 1750 MJoules/cm².

A preferred method includes: providing a coating composition that includes: water; a polymer comprising one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups; and an acid-functional polymer, which may be the same as or distinct from the polymer
 15 comprising acetoacetyl-functional groups, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been used to neutralize or partially neutralize the acid-functionality on the polymer; applying the coating composition to a substrate surface; and allowing the coating composition to harden.

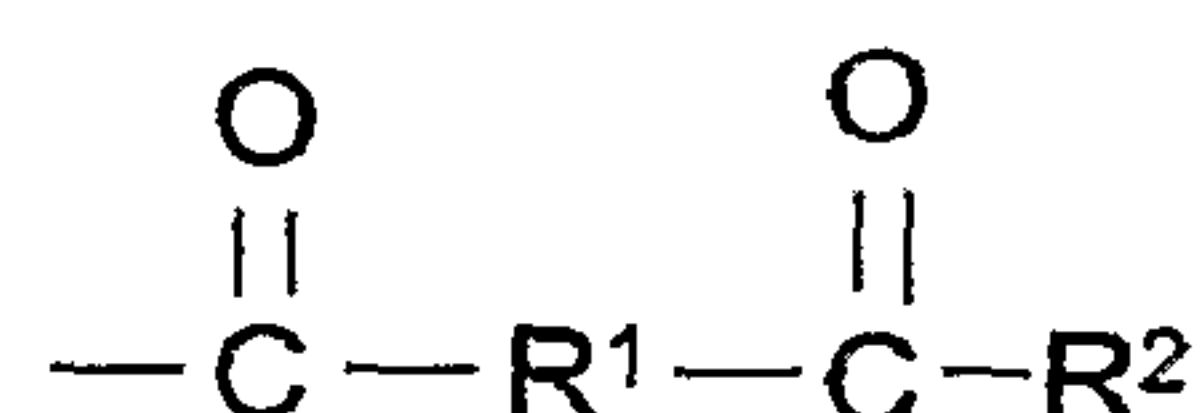
A preferred method includes: providing a coating composition that includes:
 20 water; a polymer including one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups; and an ethylenically unsaturated compound distinct from the polymer having acetoacetyl-functionality; a photoinitiator; applying the coating composition to a substrate surface; and applying ultraviolet or visible light to the coating composition to at least partially cure the coating composition.

25 A preferred method includes: providing a coating composition that includes: water; a polymer that includes one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups of the formula:



wherein R¹ is a C1 to C22 alkylene group and R² is a C1 to C22 alkyl group; and a (meth)acrylate functional compound distinct from the polymer having acetoacetyl-functionality; optionally an initiator (preferably a photoinitiator); applying the coating composition to a substrate surface; and at least partially curing the coating composition.

Another embodiment of the method includes: providing a coating composition that includes: water; a polymer including one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups of the formula:



wherein R¹ is a C1 to C22 alkylene group and R² is a C1 to C22 alkyl group; and an ethylenically unsaturated compound distinct from the polymer having acetoacetyl-functionality; a photoinitiator; applying the coating composition to a substrate surface; and applying ultraviolet or visible light to the coating composition to at least partially cure the coating composition.

Another embodiment of the method includes: providing a coating composition that includes: (i) water, (ii) a polymer including one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups, and (iii) an acid-functional polymer, which may be the same as or distinct from the polymer comprising acetoacetyl-functional groups, wherein a substantial portion of the acid-functionality on the polymer has been neutralized using a nitrogen-free base; applying the coating composition to a substrate surface; and allowing the coating composition to at least partially cure. In a preferred embodiment, the coating composition further comprises a photoinitiator and ultraviolet or visible light is applied to the coating composition to at least partially cure the coating composition.

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EXAMPLES

The following examples are offered to aid in understanding of the present invention and are not to be construed as limiting the scope thereof. Unless otherwise indicated, all parts and percentages are by weight.

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REAGENTS:

- DMPA – Dimethylolpropionic acid (GEO, Allentown, PA)
- TMPTA – Trimethylolpropane triacrylate (Sartomer, Exton, PA)
- EOTMPTA – Ethoxylated trimethylol propane triacrylate (Sartomer,
5 Exton, PA)
- 4-HBA – 4-Hydroxy butylacrylate (Aldrich, Milwaukee, WI)
- TMP – Trimethylol Propane (Aldrich)
- DESMOPHENTM S-105-110 – Polyester diol (Bayer, Pittsburgh, PA)
- TEA – Triethyl Amine (Aldrich)
- 10 DBTDL – Dibutyl Tin Dilaurate (Air Products, Allentown, PA)
- RHODAPON UBTM – Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (Rhodia, Cranbury, NJ)
- RHODAPEX CO-436TM – Nonylphenol Ethoxylated, Sulfate, NH₃ Salt
(Rhodia, Cranbury, NJ)
- IPA – Isophthalic Acid (Amoco, Chicago, IL)
- 15 AA – Adipic Acid (Aldrich Chemical, Milwaukee, WI)
- TMA – Trimellitic Anhydride (Aldrich Chemical, Milwaukee, WI)
- NPG – Neopentyl Glycol (Aldrich Chemical, Milwaukee, WI)
- DPG – Dipropylene Glycol (Aldrich Chemical, Milwaukee, WI)
- AAEM – 2-(acetoacetoxy) ethyl methacrylate (Aldrich Chemical,
20 Milwaukee, WI)
- t-BACAc - t-butyl acetoacetate (Aldrich Chemical, Milwaukee, WI)
- NMP – n-methyl pyrrolidinone (Aldrich Chemical, Milwaukee, WI)

Example 1

25 Preparation of an acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer

A reactor is charged with 775.2 parts of deionized water and 18.4 parts
RHODAPEX CO-436TM (i.e., "CO-436"). The reaction mixture is heated to 75°C
under a nitrogen blanket. During heating, a premulsion is formed comprising: 336.4
parts of deionized water, 12.2 parts CO-436, 0.8 parts ammonium persulfate, 370.0
30 parts of butyl acrylate, 190.2 parts of methyl methacrylate, 118.3 parts of styrene,
78.9 parts AAEM and 31.5 parts of methacrylic acid. Once the reaction mixture
reaches 75°C, 5% of the premulsion is added to the reactor followed by the addition

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of a mixture of 2.4 parts of ammonium persulfate and 7.5 parts of water. The reaction is held 5-10 minutes, whereupon an exotherm results and then the remaining preemulsion is fed into the reactor vessel over 2 hours. The reaction temperature is held between 80°C and 85°C, during polymerization. Once the preemulsion feed is complete, the container is rinsed with 20 parts of deionized water and the reaction is held 30 minutes. Once the 30 minute hold is complete, the resulting latex polymer is cooled to 40°C and a 28% concentrate ammonia is added to adjust the pH to 7.0-7.5 and deionized water is added to adjust the weight solids to 40%.

10

Example 2

Preparation of an ultraviolet curable acetoacetyl-functional coating composition

Under agitation to a stainless steel mixing vessel is added 100 grams of deionized water, 14.2 grams of RHODAPANTM UB, and 200 grams EOTMPTA. The mixture is blended until a pre-emulsion forms.

Under agitation to a stainless steel mixing vessel is added 1000 grams of latex polymer from Example 1, 93 grams of deionized water, and 157 grams of the EOTMPTA pre-emulsion prepared above. This mixture is then held under agitation for 8 hours until the EOTMPTA migrates into the latex polymer. Fifteen (15) grams of IRGACURETM 500 is then added to the mixture and held under agitation for another 15 minutes. The mixture is then left overnight to allow the release of any entrapped air.

The resulting mixture will cure to a hard, chemically resistant finish upon exposure to ultraviolet light. The resulting mixture from Example 2 will also cure to a hard, chemically resistant finish without the need of photoinitiator under electron beam radiation.

Example 3

Preparation of (meth)acrylate functional polyurethane dispersion (PUD) with TMPTA reactive diluent

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A reactor is charged with 96.0 parts TMPTA, 48.0 parts 4-HBA, 91.4 parts DESMOPHEN S-105-110TM polyester diol, 29.3 parts DMPA, 9.6 parts TMP, 258.9

parts isophorone diisocyanate, and 500 ppm of 2,6 di-tert-butyl-4-methylphenol.

The reaction mixture is heated to 80°C under an air sparge, where upon 250 ppm DBTDL is added and the reaction processed until the isocyanate level is below 9.2%.

The urethane polymer is cooled to 65°C and then neutralized with 22.1 parts TEA.

- 5 The urethane polymer viscosity at 65°C will be less than 6,000 centipoise (cps) as measured by a Brookfield DV-I+ Viscometer and a Number 31 spindle at 1.5 revolutions per minute (RPM).

At a process temperature of 65°C, the (meth)acrylate urethane polymer formed above is then dispersed into 895.5 parts room temperature deionized water and subsequently chain extended with 51.1 parts hydrazine (35% in water). The
10 dispersion is then adjusted to 35% solids with deionized water.

The physical properties of the chain extended (meth)acrylate functional polyurethane dispersion are as follows (NVM % = nonvolatile material by weight):

	EXAMPLE 1
NVM %	35%
% VOC	1.4% (TEA)

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Example 4

Preparation of an ultraviolet curable acetoacetyl-functional coating composition

Under agitation to a stainless steel mixing vessel is added 100 grams of deionized water, 14.2 grams of RHODAPONTM UB, and 200 grams EOTMPTA. The
20 mixture is blended until a pre-emulsion forms.

Under agitation to a stainless steel mixing vessel is added 800 grams of latex polymer from Example 1, 200 grams of the polymer from Example 3, 93 grams of deionized water, and 157 grams of the EOTMPTA preemulsion prepared above.

25 This mixture is then held under agitation for 8 hours until the EOTMPTA migrates into the latex polymer. Fifteen (15) grams of IRGACURETM 500 is then added to the mixture and held under agitation for another 15 minutes. The mixture is then left overnight to allow the release of any entrapped air.

The resulting mixture will cure to a hard, chemically resistant finish upon exposure to ultraviolet light. The resulting mixture from Example 4 will also cure to a hard, chemically resistant finish without the need of photo initiator under electron beam radiation.

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Example 5

Preparation of an acetoacetyl-functional water dispersible polyester

A reactor is charged with 383.9 parts IPA, 135.5 parts AA, 383.9 parts DPG, 101.6 parts TMP and 1500 ppm of Fascat 4100 tin catalyst from Elf Atochem. The
10 reaction mixture is slowly heated 235°C and stirred for about 4 hours and water is removed. The mixture is heated and tested until a sample has an acid number of less than 20 mg of KOH/gram. At which point 79 parts t-BAcAc is added and held at 235°C while removing methanol. Once methanol stops coming off, the mixture is cooled to 200°C and 45.2 parts TMA is added. The reaction is held at 190°C and
15 tested until the acid number is 40-45 mg of KOH/gram. Once the acid number is 40-45 mg of KOH/gram, the reaction is cooled to 100°C, and air sparge is begun and 1000 ppm MEHQ is added along with 333 grams EOTMPTA. To this mixture is added 45 parts of 28% ammonia and 2400 parts deionized water. As the water is added, the mixture is allowed to cool to room temperature and the solids are adjusted
20 to 35%.

Example 6

Preparation of an ultraviolet curable acetoacetyl-functional coating composition

Fifteen (15) grams of IRGACURE 500 is added to 1500 grams of the mixture
25 from Example 5 and held under agitation for another 15 minutes. The mixture is then left overnight to allow the release of any entrapped air.

The resulting mixture will cure to a hard, chemically resistant finish upon exposure to ultraviolet light. The resulting mixture from Example 6 will also cure to a hard, chemically resistant finish without the need of photo initiator under electron
30 beam radiation.

Example 7

Preparation of an acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer

A reactor was charged with 522.6 parts of deionized water, 1.8 parts RHODAPON UB. The reaction mixture was heated to 75°C under a nitrogen
5 blanket. During heating, a premulsion was formed comprising: 299.9 parts of deionized water, 57.4 parts of RHODAPON UB, 0.7 part ammonium persulfate, 156.6 parts of butyl acrylate, 176.0 parts of butyl methacrylate, 463.8 parts of styrene, 44.0 parts AAEM, and 39.6 parts of methacrylic acid. Once the reaction mixture reaches 75°C, 5% of the preemulsion was added to the reactor followed by
10 the addition of a mixture of 2.0 parts of ammonium persulfate and 8.1 parts of water. The reaction was held for 5 minutes to 10 minutes, whereupon an exotherm results and then the remaining pre-emulsion was fed into the reactor vessel over 2 hours. The reaction temperature was held between 80°C and 85°C, during polymerization. Once the preemulsion feed was complete, the container was rinsed with 9 parts of
15 deionized water and the reaction was held 30 minutes. As the prepolymer became viscous, 100 parts additional deionized water was added. Once the 30 minute hold was complete, the resulting latex polymer was cooled to 40°C and a 28% concentrate ammonia was added to adjust the pH to 7.0-7.5 and deionized water was added to adjust the weight solids to 45%.

20

Example 8

Comparative Example - Preparation of a non-acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer

A reactor was charged with 521.9 parts of deionized water, 3.0 parts RHODAPON UB. The reaction mixture was heated to 75°C under a nitrogen
25 blanket. During heating, a premulsion was formed comprising: 300.5 parts of deionized water, 56.1 parts of RHODAPON UB, 0.7 part ammonium persulfate, 179.7 parts of butyl acrylate, 176.0 parts of butyl methacrylate, 484.8 parts of styrene, and 39.6 parts of methacrylic acid. Once the reaction mixture reaches 75°C, 10% of the preemulsion was added to the reactor followed by the addition of a
30 mixture of 2.0 parts of ammonium persulfate and 8.1 parts of water. The reaction was held for 5 minutes to 10 minutes, whereupon an exotherm results and then the remaining preemulsion was fed into the reactor vessel over 2 hours. The reaction

temperature was held between 80°C to 85°C, during polymerization. Once the preemulsion feed was complete, the container was rinsed with 9 parts of deionized water and the reaction was held 30 minutes. As the prepolymer became viscous, 30 parts additional deionized water was added. Once the 30 minute hold was complete, the resulting latex polymer was cooled to 40 °C and a 28% concentrate ammonia was added to adjust the pH to 7.0-7.5 and deionized water was added to adjust the weight solids to 45%.

Example 9

Test comparison of the latex polymers from Examples 7 and 8

The following compositions were prepared and allowed to mix for 8 hours. At which point 1% IRGACURE 500, based on the total weight of the composition, was added to each sample and the samples were allowed to sit overnight to release any trapped air.

Components	COMPOSITION A	COMPOSITION B
Latex from Example 7	50 grams	
Latex from Example 8		50 grams
Water	6 grams	6 grams
EOTMPTA	6 grams	6 grams
NMP	1 gram	1 gram

Physical testing

A 3-mil thick (0.00762-cm) wet film was then applied to a Leneta Form 7B test chart and air dried for 15 minutes followed by force dry for 5 minutes at 65°C.

The dried (meth)acrylate polymer film was then cured by mercury ultraviolet lamps. Total UV exposure was 1000 millijoules per square centimeter (mj/cm²).

Performance properties are outlined below. Gloss is reported in accordance with ASTM test specification, D-523. All other cured film properties are reported on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being no effect or best.

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TEST	COMPOSITION A	COMPOSITION B
MEK 2x Rubs	>100	<100

MEK double rub testing was performed in accordance with ASTM test method D-5402. Composition A only showed surface marring after 100 MEK double rubs while composition B showed lower chemical resistance and showed
5 film failure and breakthrough to the substrate at 100 double rubs.

Example 10

Preparation of an acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer

An acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer may be prepared following generally
10 the procedure of Example 1, with the exception that a 45% KOH solution in water may be used to adjust the pH to 7.0-7.5 in place of the ammonia used in Example 1. Sodium persulfate may also be used as a direct weight replacement for ammonia persulfate. The polymer may be used in a UV-curable coating composition as described in Example 2.

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Example 11

Preparation of an acetoacetyl-functional water dispersible polymer

An acetoacetyl-functional water dispersible polymer may be prepared following generally the procedure of Example 5, with the exception that a 45% KOH
20 solution in water is used to neutralize the polymer in place of the 28% ammonia solution used in Example 5. A UV-curable acetoacetyl-functional coating composition may be prepared using this polymer as described in Example 6.

Having thus described the preferred embodiments of the present invention,
25 those skilled in the art will readily appreciate that the teachings found herein may be applied to yet other embodiments within the scope of the claims hereto attached.

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CLAIMS:

1. A coating composition comprising:

water;

a polymer comprising one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups;

5 an acid-functional polymer, which may be the same as or distinct from the polymer comprising acetoacetyl-functional groups, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been used to neutralize or partially neutralize the acid-functionality of the polymer;

an ethylenically unsaturated compound distinct from the acetoacetyl-
10 functional polymer; wherein the ethylenically unsaturated compound is a monomer, oligomer, or mixture thereof; and

a free-radical initiator in an amount of at least 0.1 wt-%, based on the total weight of the coating composition.
2. The coating composition of claim 1, wherein the acetoacetyl-functional
15 group is of the formula: $-C(O)-R^1-C(O)-R^2$, and wherein R^1 is a C1 to C22 alkylene group and R^2 is a C1 to C22 alkyl group.
3. The coating composition of claim 1, wherein the base is selected from the group consisting of KOH, $Ca(OH)_2$, NaOH, LiOH, and mixtures thereof.
4. The coating composition of claim 1, wherein the polymer comprising
20 one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups and the acid-functional polymer are the same polymer.
5. The coating composition of claim 1, wherein the polymer comprising one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups and the acid-functional polymer are distinct polymers.

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6. The coating composition of claim 1, wherein the ethylenically unsaturated monomer, oligomer, or mixture thereof comprises a (meth)acrylate functional monomer, oligomer, or mixture thereof.

7. The coating composition of claim 1, wherein the coating composition
5 comprises latex polymer particles, each comprising the acetoacetyl-functional polymer, the acid-functional polymer, and the ethylenically unsaturated monomer, oligomer, polymer, or mixture thereof.

8. The coating composition of claim 6, wherein the (meth)acrylate functional monomer, oligomer, or mixture thereof is a multifunctional monomer.

10 9. The coating composition of claim 8, wherein the (meth)acrylate-functional monomer is selected from the group consisting of isobornyl (meth)acrylate, isodecyl (meth)acrylate, phenoxyethyl (meth)acrylate, trimethylolpropane tri(meth)acrylate, trimethylolpropane ethoxylate tri(meth)acrylate, tripropylene glycol di(meth)acrylate, hexanediol di(meth)acrylate, tetrahydrofurfuryl (meth)acrylate,
15 beta-carboxyethyl (meth)acrylate, bisphenol A ethoxylate di(meth)acrylate, ethoxylated neopentyl glycol di(meth)acrylate, propoxylated neopentyl glycol di(meth)acrylate, di-(trimethylolpropane tetra (meth)acrylate), pentaerythritol tri(meth)acrylate, pentaerythritol tetra(meth)acrylate, and mixtures thereof.

10. The coating composition of claim 1, comprising no more than
20 10 wt-% volatile organic compounds, based on the total weight of the composition.

11. The coating composition of claim 1, wherein the acetoacetyl-functional polymer comprises an acetoacetyl-functional polyurethane, epoxy, polyamide, chlorinated polyolefin, acrylic, oil-modified polymer, polyester, or mixtures or copolymers thereof.

25 12. The coating composition of claim 1, wherein the acetoacetyl-functional polymer comprises an acetoacetyl-functional latex polymer prepared from ethylenically unsaturated monomers.

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13. The coating composition of claim 1, wherein the acetoacetyl-functional polymer is present in an amount of at least 10 wt-% and nor more than 95 wt-%, and the ethylenically unsaturated monomer, oligomer, or mixture thereof is present in an amount of at least 5 wt-% and no more than 70 wt-%, based on the combined weight of any monomers, oligomers, and polymers in the composition.
14. The coating composition of claim 1, wherein the free-radical initiator comprises a photoinitiator.
15. The coating composition of claim 14, wherein the photoinitiator comprises benzophenone, 4-methylbenzophenone, benzoyl benzoate, phenylacetophenones, 2,2-dimethoxy-2-phenylacetophenone, alpha,alpha-diethoxyacetophenone, hydroxycyclohexylphenylketone, 2-hydroxy-2-methyl-1-phenylpropan-1-one, bis-(2,6-dimethoxybenzoyl)-2,4,4-trimethylpentyl phosphine oxide, 2,4,6-trimethylbenzoyl-diphenylphosphine oxide, or combinations thereof.
16. The coating composition of claim 14, which is at least partially curable by ultraviolet or visible light.
17. A method of coating a substrate, the method comprising:
applying the coating composition of claim 1 to a substrate; and
allowing the coating composition to harden.
18. A coating on a substrate preparable by the method of claim 17.
19. The coating of claim 18, wherein the coating is in the form of a clear coating that has a non-luminescing appearance.
20. The coating composition of claim 1, wherein the ethylenically unsaturated monomer, oligomer, or mixture thereof is present in an amount of at least 5 wt-%, based on the combined weight of any monomers, oligomers, and polymers in the composition.

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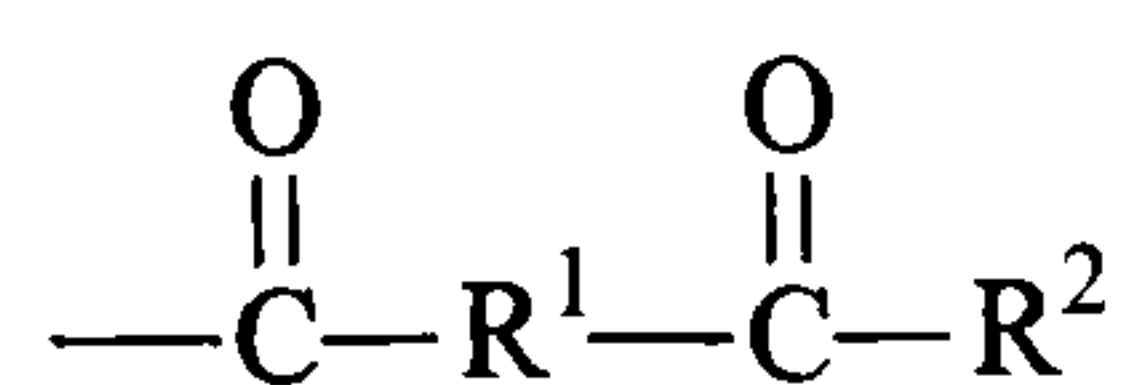
21. The coating composition of claim 20, wherein the ethylenically unsaturated monomer, oligomer, or mixture thereof is present in an amount of at least 7.5 wt-%, based on the combined weight of any monomers, oligomers, and polymers in the composition.

5 22. The coating composition of claim 21, wherein the ethylenically unsaturated monomer, oligomer, or mixture thereof is present in an amount of at least 10 wt-%, based on the combined weight of any monomers, oligomers, and polymers in the composition.

23. A method of preparing a coating composition, the method comprising:

10 preparing an alkali-soluble polymer in water, wherein the alkali-soluble polymer may or may not include acetoacetyl-functional groups;

in the presence of the alkali-soluble polymer, polymerizing a polymer comprising one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups of the formula:



15 wherein R¹ is a C1 to C22 alkylene group and R² is a C1 to C22 alkyl group, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been used to neutralize or partially neutralize the acid-functionality of the alkali-soluble polymer;

adding to the stabilized acetoacetyl-functional polymer an ethylenically unsaturated compound distinct from the polymer comprising acetoacetyl functionality;

20 wherein the ethylenically unsaturated compound is a monomer, oligomer, or mixture thereof; and

adding a free-radical initiator during or after the preparing step, wherein the free-radical initiator is added in an amount of at least 0.1 wt-% based on the total weight of the coating composition.

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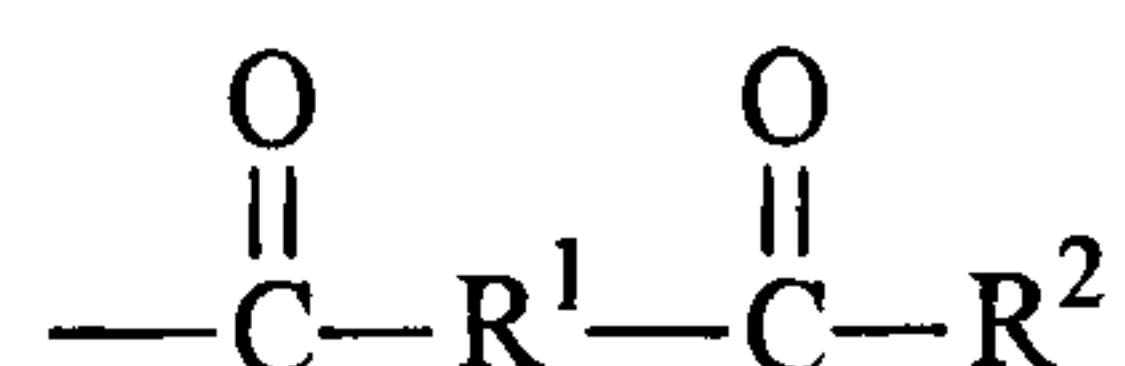
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24. A method of preparing a coating composition, the method comprising:

receiving a polymer prepared by a method comprising:

preparing an alkali-soluble polymer in water, wherein the alkali-soluble polymer may or may not include acetoacetyl-functional groups;

5 in the presence of the alkali-soluble polymer, polymerizing a polymer comprising one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups of the formula:



wherein R¹ is a C1 to C22 alkylene group and R² is a C1 to C22 alkyl group, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been used to neutralize or partially

10 neutralize the acid-functionality of the alkali-soluble polymer; and

adding to the stabilized acetoacetyl-functional polymer an ethylenically unsaturated compound distinct from the polymer comprising acetoacetyl functionality; wherein the ethylenically unsaturated compound is a monomer, oligomer, or mixture thereof; and

15 adding a free-radical initiator during or after the preparing step, wherein the free-radical initiator is added in an amount of at least 0.1 wt-% based on the total weight of the coating composition.

25. A method of using a coating composition comprising:

hardening a coating composition via free-radical initiation, wherein the
20 coating composition comprises:

water;

a polymer comprising one or more acetoacetyl-functional groups;

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an acid-functional polymer, which may be the same as or distinct from the polymer comprising acetoacetyl-functional groups, wherein a nitrogen-free base has been used to neutralize or partially neutralize the acid-functionality of the polymer; and

5 an ethylenically unsaturated compound distinct from the acetoacetyl-functional polymer; wherein the ethylenically unsaturated compound is a monomer, oligomer, or mixture thereof.

26. The coating of claim 18, wherein the coating is in the form of a clear coating having an appearance with reduced luminescence relative to a coating
10 wherein a nitrogen-containing base is used in absence of a nitrogen-free base to neutralize or partially neutralize the acid functionality of the polymer.