Claims:

1. A method of forming a hydrophobic coating on a surface of a polishing system component, comprising:

cleaning the surface of the polishing system component to remove a polishing fluid residue therefrom; and

applying a hydrophobicity causing chemical solution to the surface of the polishing system component using a hydrophobicity applicator, the hydrophobicity applicator comprising:

an applicator article formed of an open-celled foam material which has a porosity of about 60% or more; and

the hydrophobicity causing chemical solution.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the polishing system component is a part of a substrate carrier assembly, and wherein the hydrophobicity causing chemical solution is applied using a spray process.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the applicator and the hydrophobicity causing chemical solution are packaged in a sealed container.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the applicator article, as disposed in the sealed container, is impregnated with the hydrophobicity causing chemical solution.

5. The method of claim 3, wherein the sealed container comprises a membrane layer separating the applicator article from the hydrophobicity causing chemical solution and the method further includes breaking the membrane to impregnate the applicator article with the hydrophobicity causing chemical solution.

6. The method of claim 2, wherein

the polishing system component comprises a platen shield,

the hydrophobicity applicator is coupled to a polishing platen, and

applying the hydrophobicity causing solution comprises rotating the polishing platen to urge the hydrophobicity applicator against a radially inward-facing surface of the platen shield.

7. The method of claim 2, wherein

the polishing system component is disposed within a substrate processing environment of the polishing system, and

the hydrophobicity causing solution is applied to the surface of the polishing system component without removing the polishing system component from the substrate processing environment.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein

the polishing system component comprises a conditioner mounting plate having a first surface for mounting an abrasive pad conditioning disk and a second surface opposite of the first surface, and

the hydrophobicity causing solution is applied to the second surface without disassembling the conditioner mounting plate from a pad conditioner assembly.

9. A method of forming a hydrophobic coating on a surface of a polishing system component, comprising:

cleaning the surface of the polishing system component to remove a polishing fluid residue therefrom; and

applying a hydrophobicity causing chemical solution to the surface of the polishing system component using a hydrophobicity applicator, the hydrophobicity applicator comprising:

an applicator article formed of an open-celled foam material which has a porosity of about 60% or more; and

the hydrophobicity causing chemical solution,

wherein the polishing system component is disposed within a substrate processing environment of the polishing system, and wherein the hydrophobicity causing solution is

applied to the surface of the polishing system component without removing the polishing system component from the substrate processing environment.