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Authors' Response

Sir,

The comment points out that fine GSR particles can attach themselves to the AFM tip, thereby altering the tip shape and size and influencing the images. The sizes of GSR particles in this paper range from 0.25 to 2.0 μm. Although these can be described as ''fine'' particles for practical purposes, they are huge compared with the radius of the tip, which typically varies from 20 to 50 nm [see Ref. (1)]. If GSR particles attached themselves to the AFM tip, the observed images would be greatly blurred images rather than distorted images. Furthermore, this is not the first report of novel-shaped GSR particles. Irregular GSR particles were shown in Ref. (2).

References

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2. Cardinetti B, Ciampini C, D'Onofrio C, et al. X-ray mapping technique: a preliminary study in discriminating gunshot residue particles from aggregates of environmental occupational origin. Forensic Sci Int 2004;143:1–19.

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