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Lubrication for Laundry Equipment

By John Schneider

(The following article originally appeared in the June 1993 issue of Textile Rental magazine.)

Proper lubrication of today's high-dollar, high-tech, high-temperature laundry equipment is necessary to avoid expensive downtime, maintenance, and expenses. The most common lubricants are:

- greases, often called lubes, for bearings and low-speed/high pressure applications.
- gear oil for mechanical drives and gear boxes, and
- crankcase oils for engines (seldom used for laundry processing equipment, but definitely used for delivery vehicles).

How lubricants work

In simplest terms, lubrication reduces friction and wear by providing a smooth film between parts that move against each other. For example, a plain journal bearing has a bearing sleeve that surrounds the shaft. The space between the bearing and the shaft is filled with oil. When the bearing is at rest the oil is squeezed out by the weight of the shaft, causing metal-to-metal contact. When the shaft rolls, it drags oil underneath it. Oil sticks to the shaft as it turns, thus creating a film separating the metals. As rotation increases, more oil is drawn under the shaft. It forms a wedge-shaped oil layer and prevents the shaft from touching the bearing surface. The principle is basic to all anti-wear lubrication of power transmission equipment.

Viscosity/additives vary according to need

Because lubricants become thin as temperatures rise and thicken as they cool, machinery manufacturers must take care that they specify a minimum viscosity (a measurement of an oil's ability to flow at a given temperature) number that protects equally at high operating temperatures, during cold start-ups, and in overheated conditions. Note that viscosity numbers only specify an oil's flow rate; the viscosity index number rates the quality of the lubricant.

Oils and greases contain different additives to provide different attributes or operating characteristics. As an example, gear oil is a general purpose oil with many uses, depending upon the kind of gears and operating conditions. It is these conditions that determine the characteristics of the gear oil to be used. For enclosed gear boxes, gear oils should be formulated to be waterproof, corrosion proof, and rustproof and have a high loading ability, meaning that the oil clings to the metal.

Selecting gear oils and grease

AGMA or SAE Gear Oil Charts aid in gear oil selection. Viscosity range is wide, so it's important to follow manufacturers' recommendations. You should depart from these recommendations only when it becomes obvious that serious problems exist, such as rising temperatures, excessive wear debris, or constant parts breakdown. Your supplier should

analyze these problems and recommend corrective action. Once you've selected a viscosity range, you should look for the following additives:

- strong film strength package,
- good rust and oxidation properties,
- viscosity index of 100+ ,
- EP (extreme pressure) package,
- solid thermal capacity,
- dispersibility package (an oil's ability to disperse moisture is directly related to seal life).

Greases must be fluid enough to work their way throughout a bearing and move through grooves when necessary. They also must be tacky enough to hold in the bearing and take the loading without separating into oil and base. When choosing a lube look for good:

- EP properties,
- AW (anti-wear) properties,
- RW (rust and water) properties,
- lubricating additives.

To ensure that you are selecting the right lube for difficult applications, provide your supplier with the following detailed information:

- machine type and description,
- name of the part,
- type of motion,
- time sequence,
- temperature of bearing,
- environmental description,
- speed,
- possible contaminants,
- ambient temperature,
- size, and
- past history.

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[Profile...](#)

John Schneider is Tingue, Brown and Company's Regional Manager of West Coast Operations. John oversees the operation and administration of the Company's Montebello, California-based office, has responsibility for several major, multi-plant customers, and serves as sales manager for five sales representatives covering fourteen states and two provinces. In order to "stay fresh," John handles the Hawaiian territory himself, making at least four, two-week sales and service trips to the Islands each year.

John started his career at Tingue, Brown in July of 1962 as a sales representative. Previously, John had been an account representative in the trucking business with Garrett Freight Lines (now ANR). Tingue, Brown was one of his bigger customers.

John's first career was as a professional baseball player. John was a talented catcher in the farm system of the Pittsburgh Pirates, having been promoted to the AAA level Hollywood Stars. John has authored articles for Textile Rental magazine and has given production, maintenance, and quality seminars on numerous occasions. John is convinced that experience is still the best teacher for the laundry industry. His own 32+ years in the industry has helped to serve his many customers very well.

John and his wife, Jacqueline, live north of the Los Angeles area in La Canada, California. They have four children and five grandchildren.

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[Ask Tingue, Brown About...](#)

Employee Morale

The job of creating clean linen from dirty linen can oftentimes feel never-ending. Dave Graumlisch, Assistant Laundry Manager at the Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee, has come up with a way to improve employee morale by creating opportunities to achieve a sense of accomplishment. At the Opryland laundry, carts full of laundry-in-process are color-coded. Each color represents the laundry that is expected to be completed at the end of each shift. Employees can now easily see where there stand at all times of the shift. And, at the end of a shift, even though there may be several baskets of laundry remaining to be processed, employees can know that those baskets were scheduled for the following shift anyway and that they have accomplished a good day's work. Dave points out that it is a good way to establish goal-setting for employees and he states that production improvements are noticeable.

Dry Skin

What!? Tingue, Brown is in the hand cream business?! No, not really, but

Jim Stine, who covers Up-State New York, Vermont and Western Massachusetts for Tingue, Brown, recently suggested during a presentation at a NAILM meeting at the Bay State Medical Center in Springfield, Massachusetts that finding containers of hand lotion near a flatwork ironer does not necessarily indicate that your ironer feeders have skin problems or that the weather is hot and dry.

Oftentimes, ironer feeders suffer from dry skin because the linen they are handling contains a high degree of chemical residue. You may need a better rinse cycle or perhaps even a better wash formula in your washroom.

Stine recommends checking the pH level in your linen for excessive alkalinity or acidity. But, Stine warns, don't rely solely on a pH measurement! Your linen may still contain excessive chemicals that balance each other out and indicate a neutral pH, yet can still cause serious damage to your linen and, Stine adds, your roll paddings and coverings and aprons. If you don't keep a close watch on your washroom formulas, your textile expenditures can really add up -- not to mention all that hand cream!

Safety

If you were to invite a stranger into your laundry operation, would that stranger be able to turn off every piece of equipment without any instruction? If your answer is "No," then you may be running an unsafe operation. Remember: red means "stop"; green means "go"; and orange and yellow mean "caution." Each piece of equipment should have clearly marked "Stop" buttons. If yours don't have them, get them!!

Leading Edge Quality

Problems with the finishing quality of your flatwork may be attributable to loose roll bearings and/or loose roll boxes on your flatwork ironer, says Fred Lofland, who covers Michigan and the northern regions of Indiana and Ohio for Tingue, Brown. When roll bearings and roll boxes are loose, Lofland explains, ironer rolls will continually want to climb forward. This puts tremendous pressure on the front entry point of linen into the ironer. As a result, the leading edge of your linen may get smashed or crumpled up and the finished product looks lousy. Once roll bearings and roll boxes are worn loose the problem only compounds itself further by the climbing forward and falling back of the rolls. Lofland suggests inserting brass shims into each of the roll boxes in order to tighten them. This will keep the rolls square to and steady in the chest. Leading edge quality should improve immediately.

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[Tingue, Brown can simplify your Laundry Lubricant Program!](#)

If your laundry is like most, you are using - and stocking - as many as 14 different lubricants to service all of your machinery. Tingue, Brown has a way to make your life easier and improve the lubrication of your machines: "The Basic 4" Lubrication Program. Now just four lubricants do the job that for some takes up to 14, and they do it better. With the "Basic 4," you'll reduce wear, prevent rust and corrosion, and, in many cases, actually reduce the power consumption of drive motors. Most important, you can increase the intervals between lubrications, thereby reducing man-hours and costs.

1. **Tingue, Brown Laundry Grease BA420S**
A universal-type grease: waterproof, high-temperature, fibrous.
2. **Tingue, Brown Laundry Gear Oil 90/140**
For enclosed gear boxes: waterproof, corrosion and rust proof, high loading ability.
3. **Tingue, Brown Laundry Machinery Oil**
An all-purpose lubricating oil: high viscosity index, detergent-free.
4. **Molylube "6 in 1" Aerosol**
A penetrating and lubricating oil: cleans, displaces water, protects, and prevents wear.

Ask your Tingue, Brown rep or call the nearest Tingue, Brown office for more information.

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The Corner Collection of Quarterly Quotables

We're all guilty at one time or another of faulty grammar or misuse of words. The following mistranslations are particularly amusing:

In a Paris hotel elevator: "Please leave your values at the front desk."

In the lobby of a Moscow hotel: "You are welcome to visit the cemetery where famous Russian and Soviet composers, artists, and writers are buried daily except Thursday."

In an ad by a Hong Kong dentist: "Teeth extracted by the latest Methodists."

In a Tokyo hotel: "It is forbidden to steal hotel towels please. If you are not a person to do such a thing, please do not read this notice."

Send your favorite "Quotable" to: Tingue, Brown & Co., 7333 W. Harrison Street, Forest Park, Illinois, 60130, Attn: David Tingue

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"Let's Play the Feud!"

The family of Jack Beckwith, Tingue, Brown's rep in Southern CA, AZ, and NM, will appear on T.V.'s "Family Feud" on May 26th. Look for them and cheer them on! "Good answer!!"

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