

LUBRICANTS WORLD 2003 Annual Awards



The year 2003 marks the 11th in which *Lubricants World* has recognized outstanding lubricants/lubricants related products and companies that make them. These products are poised to advance and enrich the lubricants industry in the areas of additives, automotive lubes, base oils, equipment, greases, industrial lubes, metalworking fluids, services, and specialties. The products were selected based on the impact they have or are likely to have on the industry. We invite you to join us in congratulating this year's winners.

By Kathryn Carnes

SPECIALTY

Rheolube 374A, B, and C Greases, Nye Lubricants

Nye Lubricants developed its 374A, B, and C greases to fill the gap left when ExxonMobil discontinued its Andok 260, B, and C greases. Nye first developed

Rheolube 374A in response to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base's (WP) request for a replacement for Andok 260; Ed Parr, marketing communications manager for Nye, notes that beyond simple replacement, WP wanted the new grease to have improved performance for certain critical aircraft applications. The end result was Rheolube 374A, which was qualified to MIL-PRF-32014.

"The discontinuation of Andok 260 alone would not have been significant enough reason to get the 374 series program started," Parr says; "when another customer asked specifically for an Andok C replacement, we decided to develop a complete replacement series. Andok B and especially C are well-known, high-speed bearing greases. They are older petroleum greases, but they have been an industry standard in high-speed precision bearings for years." Nye had already been ultrafiltering, modifying, and reprocessing Andok C for precision bearing manufacturers to meet specific customer requirements, Parr says.

The Rheolube 374 series greases combine the strong attributes of the Andoks (their excellent channeling ability, for example) with an upgrade from petroleum to synthetic basestocks, better water washout capabilities, and other features, Parr says. For instance, in the development of Rheolube 374C (an NLGI Grade 4 grease), Nye switched from the Andok C's sodium soap thickening agent (which conferred not only its desirable channeling ability and high-temperature performance, but also its poor water washout resistance) to a complex lithium hydro-xystearate thickener. A polyalphaolefin basestock and a new anti-



wear/antioxidant additive package were also used. In the end, Parr reports, the complex formulation performs even better than the development team had anticipated, with better dropping point performance (280°C) and vapor pressure performance (5.6 x 10⁻⁸ torr at 25°C). In addition, noise and vibration performance are better.

Market response has been "strong and broad," Parr reports. "We expect significant growth in sales over the next 2 years as our greases are qualified. The need for wide-temperature performance and longer bearing life will drive many customers to the 374 series."

Parr also notes that "the 374 series fits Nye's mission as The SmartGrease Company—the company that custom-designs synthetic grease that 'knows' how customers want their products to perform." Nye plans to broaden its product offerings for high-speed precision bearings to include higher-temperature-tolerant basestocks, novel thickening systems, and additive packages to increase bearing life.

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