

Lubrication Management Reduces Operating Costs

Nebraska Transport Company (NTC), headquartered in Scottsbluff, NE has been a family owned regional LTL carrier since 1973 and has served the contiguous 48 states and parts of Canada through its truckload division since 1987. With terminal operations in Nebraska, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Illinois and the Dakotas, the NTC fleet faces severe climate changes with hot summers and generally very cold and snowy winters.

In 1999, a Terminal Manager & Head Mechanic voiced concerns regarding fleet maintenance. A program incorporating fuel analysis and Hydrotex® Power-Kleen™, a diesel fuel improver, was initiated on a test fleet of 10 trucks for nine (9) months. The resultant fuel efficiency improvements were measurable and dramatic; the program was extended to the entire fleet. This led the way to a collaborative partnership with Hydrotex.

NTC uses HyFilm® LEO 5W40, Hydrosynthetic® Engine Oil in all of their vehicles and the average drain cycle has been extended four to five times over the historical average. The fleet of 118 over-the-road trucks drive a combined total of six (6) million miles per year. After the implementation of the Hydrotex Lubrication Management Process, the number of oil changes for this fleet dropped from approximately 600 oil changes annually to 133. The resultant annualized savings in oil filters was \$20,510. In addition, 4,907 fewer gallons of engine oil was used, giving a net annualized savings for oil over \$42,000. The conversion to HyFilm LEO essentially provided a 2:1 ROI; for every dollar spent on HyFilm LEO, high performance engine oil, two dollars are saved due to extended drains, fewer filters and less oil. Costs associated with equipment downtime and maintenance savings were not included in the economics. Oil analysis is performed on all vehicles and has been an effective tool for a condition-based maintenance program. For example, oil analysis was crucial in identifying faulty oil coolers in recently purchased trucks; the analysis identified the problem and predicted the failure while the units were still under warranty. Oil analysis combined with proper data interpretation continues to be an effective tool to identify potential problems and optimize maintenance intervals.

NTC had also been experiencing premature failures on U Joints. On average, U Joints were being changed every nine (9) months. The problem was linked to a lack of lubrication and the usage of the wrong grease. It is estimated that each failure cost NTC approximately \$200. HydroSyn™ 70 NLGI #2 was recommended and now the U Joints remain in service for an average of 2.5 years. The annualized savings was over \$31,000.

The winter months also present NTC a unique and separate set of challenges with fuel gelling issues. Fuel analysis is utilized to adjust and optimize the treat ratio of fuel with Hydrotex Power-Kleen™ Arctic diesel fuel improver; this compensates for the quality of diesel fuel that is available. Wax content can vary not only with the season (winter fuel vs. summer fuel) but also from load to load. It is estimated that NTC incurs a cost of \$1,000 for every stranded truck due to icing, gelling and plugged fuel filters. Through utilizing the Hydrotex products and solutions, this concern and these expenses have been eliminated.

Brent Holliday, CEO of Nebraska Transport Company, sums up the relationship, "Our long-term partnership with Hydrotex and our local Hydrotex Division Partner has been very successful. Not only are we protecting our equipment with high performance lubricants, but we have implemented a Lubrication Management Process to reduce operating costs, increase ROI and reduce our carbon footprint. In addition, our Fuel and Oil Analysis programs provide critical information regarding the performance and endurance of our equipment while establishing a roadmap to quality short-term and long-term maintenance planning."