

NEWS RELEASE

'VSG' - A READILY BIODEGRADABLE* GREASE GETS FOOD GRADE APPROVAL

Background: Obtaining regulatory approval for a lubricant as a non-food chemical used in food preparation facilities means that the ingredients have been reviewed and deemed acceptable. This service is no longer performed by US government agencies but it still provided by Agriculture Canada's Food Inspection Agency. Approval was granted this year.

Significance: There is not necessarily any environmental advantage for the use of a food grade grease for wicket gates. This is because they can still be based on solvent refined mineral oils which are not readily biodegradable according to the CEC criteria. In addition, many food grade lubricants are coloured with considerable amounts of zinc oxide. This zinc can be of concern and is regulated in some jurisdictions. Also, the use of many extreme pressure and anti-wear additives are generally not acceptable in food grade greases so that the performance of a food grade grease might not be as good. The consequence can be a shorter life for the bearings and/or gate performance issues which could have adverse environmental implications.

On the other hand VSG was developed specifically for wicket gate bearings so that operators could have better environmental options and to continue using time tested bronze bearings. VSG is mainly canola oil and is 'readily biodegradable'. Plus, VSG has other environmental advantages. There is no added lead or chlorine, it has good water resistance without barium or lithium based thickeners and it has extreme pressure (EP) performance without needing zinc based additives. In addition, the canola oil in VSG is a natural, renewable product which can be part of sustainable development programs.

VSG is made in North America by a US based company and while many vegetable oil based greases suffer from poor pumpability at low temperatures, VSG does not. As proof, VSG meets the cold weather requirements of Ontario Power Generation and Hydro-Québec and remains the only approved 'green' grease.

Now, VSG is also approved as a food grade lubricant which is further evidence of the superior nature of this formulation and thickener system.

* Based on >81% biodegradability according to CEC test protocol.

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