



FOR RECYCLING TODAY

RE: JUNE SCRAP HANDLER FOCUS

Automatic lubrication earns a big thumbs-up from busy scrap recycler

Campbellville, ON - Having installed automatic lubrication systems on all types of heavy equipment, BEKA WORLD Product Manager Dave McDougall has a particular phrase to describe scrap recyclers. "They definitely need to make hay while the sun shines."

Well, the sun has been shining on Moffatt Scrap Iron & Metal Inc. And that's what makes auto-lube systems the ideal fit for the fleet of material handlers working at the busy full-service scrap metal recycling yard in southern Ontario.

"The machine needs as much grease as it needs," says Randy Jarry, Moffatt's General Manager. "We quantify the savings in actual operator time. You've got the machine operators actually moving and processing material, rather than being on the ground, walking around their machines and having to manually grease every point."

From the important safety standpoint, the material handler operator still has to do his daily start-up checks, but would also have to stop at each grease point and manually apply lubricant if not for the auto-lube system. "Even if he had the help of an electric pump with that, it's still a task he is running through on top of his checks," says Jarry. "He could be delayed anywhere from a half-hour to an hour going through that process. Well, according to Jarry, automatic lubrication really shaves that down considerably.

"With six material handlers going, we're picking up three hours a day of actual processing time," he calculates. "For us, that's the advantage and it's a huge one. You're talking thousands of dollars in material movement that we're gaining from a productivity standpoint. It's not that the maintenance role is not valuable, but we can find more valuable uses for the operator than pumping grease into a machine."

North America is catching up

As Product Manager for BEKA WORLD, McDougall has had a boots-in-the-dirt view of technology that is long established in Europe and, more recently, has been working its way into all equipment applications in North America. BEKA, founded in Germany, is a longtime worldwide manufacturer and supplier of auto-lube systems, both self-branded and for leading OEMs.



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“If they can get in with a grease gun, we can install an automatic system,” says McDougall, who says some North American customers almost stumble into the technology. The new material handlers or loaders they just bought may arrive factory-prepped for auto-lube systems, or perhaps they may have picked up some used equipment at auction that just happened to have systems already installed.

“Once they get that taste of it, it’s all good,” says McDougall. “It’s not so much how people get educated, as long as they do get educated, because the technology really is beneficial to someone who is paying hundreds of thousands of dollars or more for a machine.

“If you do the servicing, and look after your maintenance, you’re going to have a machine that stands the test of time,” he says. “If you have a machine that is down, you can’t process, it’s as simple as that.”

No rest in this yard

Moffatt Scrap Iron & Metal Inc. is located in Campbellville, Ontario, along Highway 401, one of North America’s busiest commercial and transportation corridors. The company has bin accounts throughout the entire province, says Jarry, but relies heavily on scrap metal from the “true Golden Horseshoe” industrial base running from Oshawa, Ontario, through the Greater Toronto Area and around Lake Ontario to the Niagara Region.



“We have the auto-lube systems on our mobile Liebherr fleet, which really is the backbone of our business,” says Jarry, who spent more than 10 years in the British Columbia scrap industry before relocating back home to Ontario and joining Moffatt in 2016. “Those are the main material handlers and, in some cases, on the heavier-grade material, they’re our biggest processors as well.” Additionally, Moffatt Scrap Iron & Metal will consider adding auto-lube systems to stationary equipment on the 50-acre site it has occupied since 1984 under first-generation Owner and President Steve Moffatt.



Two of the six Liebherr material handlers pick scrap at Moffatt’s busy yard in Campbellville, Ontario.

BEKAWORLD’s team has installed systems on various makes and models of shredders, screeners, stackers and balers. In some recycling and waste operations, these machine types may be relied upon to work 24/7. “That’s the beauty of automatic lubrication,” says McDougall. “The machine is greased when it’s working.” Machine maintenance doesn’t go away, he explains, but rather becomes more strategic with increased uptime and machine availability.

Capable of servicing up to 600 lubrication points with one pump, an integrated BEKA auto-lube system not only ensures grease is applied, even at cold temperatures. It also eliminates the potential for component damage and environmental waste that can be caused by over-greasing, which is not an uncommon occurrence when left to hurried human hands.



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The system is accessed by a centralized pump and control system mounted in an easily-accessed location. In the case of the elevated Moffatt machines, that is right behind the cab.

“For now, we have restricted the auto-lube systems to our mobile material-handling equipment fleet, where it has proven to work very well for us,” say Moffatt’s Jarry. “It’s a time-saver, more than anything else. It’s a wise alternative to having our operators out there constantly greasing their machines, or we’re wondering whether or not it has been done at all.

“It’s not that you don’t have to put your eye on it and check it, but it takes the human forgetful factor out of that aspect of our operations.”

A good time to be in business

With good demand for processed product currently from steel mills both nearby in southern Ontario and throughout the United States, one less thing to worry about is music to Jarry’s ears. “You’re moving material, you’re processing material, it’s going over the curb, and it’s making you money,” he says of the current state of the industry. “Right now, it’s a good time to be in the scrap business.”

The process starts with the truckloads of old appliances, demolished structures and wrecked automobiles that stream into the yard. “Basically, any of the difficult, big ugly things out there in the world, we handle,” Jarry says with a laugh.

“We have a pretty big capability, but generally we would do on a monthly basis somewhere between 10,000 and 15,000 net tons,” he says. “You have spikes and you have down periods, and some of them are strategic decisions based on what the market is running at. We might say, ‘Oh, the market’s low this month, so we’re only going to buy 6,000 or 7,000 tons,’ or ‘the market’s great, we’re going to buy 20,000.’”

Moffatt handles both ferrous and non-ferrous metal, among the assorted scrap that arrives at the site. “You want to be able to ideally produce what you’re bringing in,” says Jarry. Once processed, the shredded metal is either sold as is or recycled back into machine metal.

“The key is to have, as they call it in the industry, prepared material when it goes out of here,” says Jarry. “The mills down the line don’t want to be spending time further processing it. Basically, we take it almost back to its original state and move it on.”

The avoidance of even one equipment malfunction is justification for automatic lubrication systems in waste and recycling operations, says BEKAWORLD’s McDougall



Auto-lube pumps and control systems conveniently mounted right behind the cab



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“We don’t have room for downtime,” agrees Jarry. “The old adage is, ‘We don’t make any money until it goes over the curb.’ We’ve got to get it in, get it done, and get it out.”

Prepared by

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