TECHNICAL BULLETIN

Correctly Identifying Turnaround Issues Maximizes Value of Fluid Analysis Results

The value of fluid analysis results diminishes with time as the condition of both the in-service fluid and the equipment being tested continue to change. As a result, turnaround time is often a top priority when it comes to choosing a testing facility. But if and when turnaround becomes a problem, how do you know where and with whom the real issues lie?

Sending timely samples should be as important as receiving timely results

Everyone involved in the maintenance process should be on the same page and working with the same sense of urgency. Determine how critical the equipment you're testing is to production. If units critical to production are at risk or you suspect a problem, we highly recommend that you overnight samples to any one of our six locations – Edmonton, Guatemala City, Houston, Indianapolis, Poznan, or Salt Lake City - and request that the designated testing be rushed. This gives you a two-day total turnaround time - one day in shipping and one day in processing - from the time the sample is taken to the time results are available.

Set sampling schedules and ship samples the day they are taken

Often, this easier said than done since frequently more than one person is involved in the process. One person may issue the work order to pull a sample, a second person will actually take the sample, a third person is responsible for sending the sample to the lab and yet a fourth person receives and acts upon the results. It seems that only when results appear to take too long or when recommendations become useless because a unit has already failed, does a sense of urgency on anyone's part actually surface.

Provide the laboratory with as much information as possible

Even taking good samples at the right intervals and sending them to your laboratory immediately isn't enough to maximize turnaround. It is also important to accurately complete all of the information requested as well as provide any additional information the laboratory might find helpful. The same rule applies to samples being submitted online via HORIZON®, through our HORIZON® mobile app, or if paperwork is used. Our Information Management System bases flagging parameters on a very large database of testing results. The more accurate and specific your information is about the fluid and equipment, the more accurate your data analysis will be. The best information means the best picture possible of both the unit and the lubricant's condition.

Use a Trackable Mail Service to Send Samples to the Laboratory

Valuable time is often lost in shipping when samples are sent via regular mail. In most instances, used oil samples are classified as non-hazardous materials and require no special handling or documentation. Using carriers such as UPS, FedEx or DHL allows you to officially document when samples actually leave your facility, track progress from pick-up to delivery and hold your laboratory accountable for time elapsed from delivery date until processing is complete.

Use a Laboratory that Shares the Responsibility for Identifying Turnaround Time Bottlenecks

We've developed a Turnaround Time Report accessible through both our free online reporting service, HORIZON. The application will track, graph and total the number of days each sample spends in both shipping and processing using the date the sample was taken, the date it arrives at the lab and the date processing is completed.

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