



Almagard® Vari-Purpose Lubricant (3752)

Cable TV Construction & Installation – Houston, Tex.

Trenchers

Customer Profile

Cable TV Construction & Installation lays most of the underground TV and power cable in the planned community of The Woodlands (population about 35,000) located just north of Houston, Texas. They have been an LE customer since 1990.

Application

The company owns 13 trenchers; eleven of them are Ditch Witch. They also own pickup trucks and trailers. The equipment is loaned to operating crews who are paid by the foot of cable installed. If the equipment is not operating the crews don't get paid and the jobs are delayed or lost to competition.

Challenge

The equipment and crews operate in very hot, dirty and often wet conditions. Prior to switching to LE's Almagard® Vari-Purpose Lubricant (3752), equipment breakdowns were common and repair costs were unacceptable. This was especially true of the pivot arm shaft and bearing assembly, which supports and drives the trenching chain. This arm is constantly being hit and covered with dirt removed from the trench. With dirt flying, engine and chain noise often hide seal, bearing and even shaft failures resulting in expensive downtime and job delays.

LE Solution

Almagard 3752 was recommended for this application because it is very tacky and can not be wiped off or pushed out by digging action. Additionally, the Almagard® additives in the product ensure that the shaft and bearings run cool protecting the shaft sleeve and seals.



Results

One example of savings occurred on a Ditch Witch 4010 (vintage 1982 to 1993). Dirt entered the main drive shaft out board side wearing away the seal and then allowing dirt to wear down the bearing, spacers and seal. While significant damage occurred before being discovered,



Almagard 3752 enabled the equipment to run without totally destroying the shaft liner, the inner bearing and seal, the chain sprockets and the timing chain. The operation is noisy and dirty. With the machine in operation it is impossible to hear or see that the seal has failed and dirt and water are entering the bearing. Because Almagard 3752 is very tacky, it resists dirt and water washout thus protecting the bearing until the operator discovers the problem. Prior to using Almagard 3752, the entire assembly would fail and the cost of repairs were both significantly higher and the equipment was out of service longer. Because the equipment itself is old, it can take as long as a week to get replacement parts.

The cost and the labor required to repair the Ditch Witch increases the longer the damage goes unnoticed. In this instance at least a thousand dollars was saved.

Charley Norris, chief mechanic, said that for the Ditch Witch 4010 the worst case is that the entire shaft and pivot arm are replaced at a cost of \$900 plus 14 to 16 hours of labor, plus as long as a week to secure repair

parts. However, newer equipment like the 5110 model, which has heavier components, cost \$5100 to repair thus the savings from Almagard 3752 will increase. Owner Dana Martin, concurs Almagard 3752 is one of the keys to profits for Cable TV Construction & Installation.

Other Products Used

- Syntemp® Synthetic Lubricant (9102)



Thank you to Dana Martin, owner, Charley Norris, chief mechanic, and to Jason Wheelless, LE lubrication consultant (pictured), for providing the information used in this report.



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