

A switch to borax-free lubricants ahead of new regulations

Lubricant producer Condat is taking a lead in alerting the wire drawing industry about regulation changes occurring in the European Union regarding borax, which may impact investments and safety procedures.

Borax has traditionally been used in two types of wire drawing products – surface coatings and dry drawing lubricants – but the substance has been controversial in the wire drawing industry for more than 15 years. Often employed in wire preparation after acid picking and phosphating, borax coating is used to improve the pick-up of the dry drawing lubricant and to neutralise any acid residues on the wire. It is sometimes incorporated as a high-performance additive in dry drawing lubricants. However, due to its chemical composition, it has been identified several times by the European Union for the potential reprotoxic danger it represents.

Further to the Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/849 published in the Official Journal

of the European Union in May 2021, the regulation on Borax Classification, Labelling and Packaging will change from 17 December 2022. Products containing ≥ 0.3 per cent borax and/or boric acid will be classified as Reprotoxic Category 1B in the European Union. As a result, the hazard statement “H360FD: May damage fertility. May damage the unborn child” will be added to the safety data sheet and the label of these products, accompanied by the “exploding chest” hazard pictogram.

The REACH authorisation procedure is still pending but, if confirmed, all users of products containing borax or boric acid will be obliged to substitute these products or face very restrictive use measures.

Condat prioritises the monitoring of substances used and the improvement of the formulation of these products. The company has expanded its range of borax-free wire drawing lubricants over the years to meet the most demanding applications. Its borax-free surface coat-



Condat produces a range of borax-free lubricants

ings offer a higher roughness and deposit weight, plus increased resistance to humidity pick-up compared to traditional borax baths.

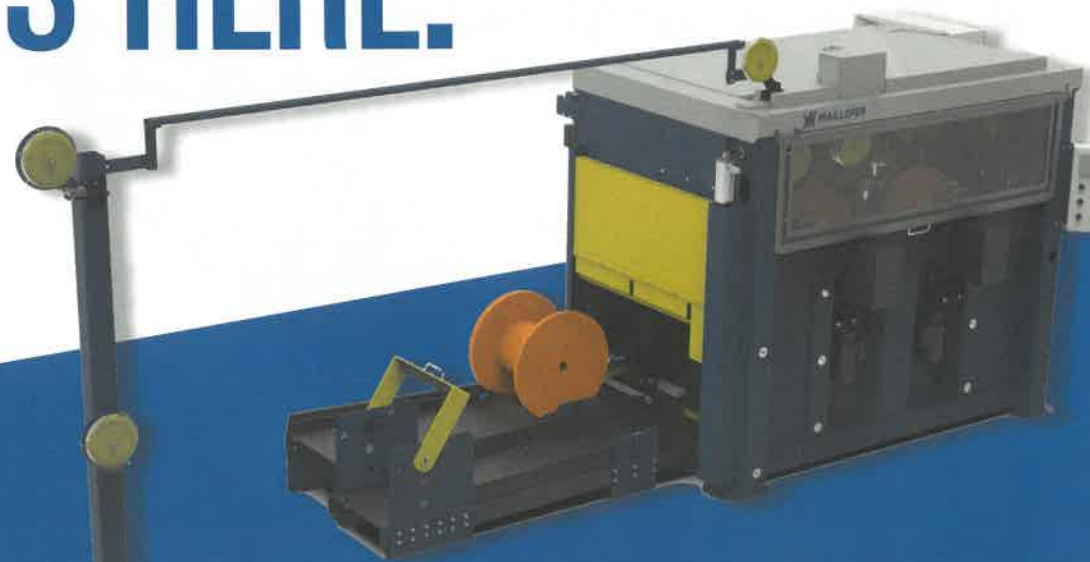
The company's borax-free dry drawing lubricants in some cases even demonstrate increased performance over traditional borax-containing products. With high to low fat content, and high to low softening points, there are borax-free lubricants suitable for all types of application.

For more information on the regulation changes, please see Condat's exhibitor profile on page 100.

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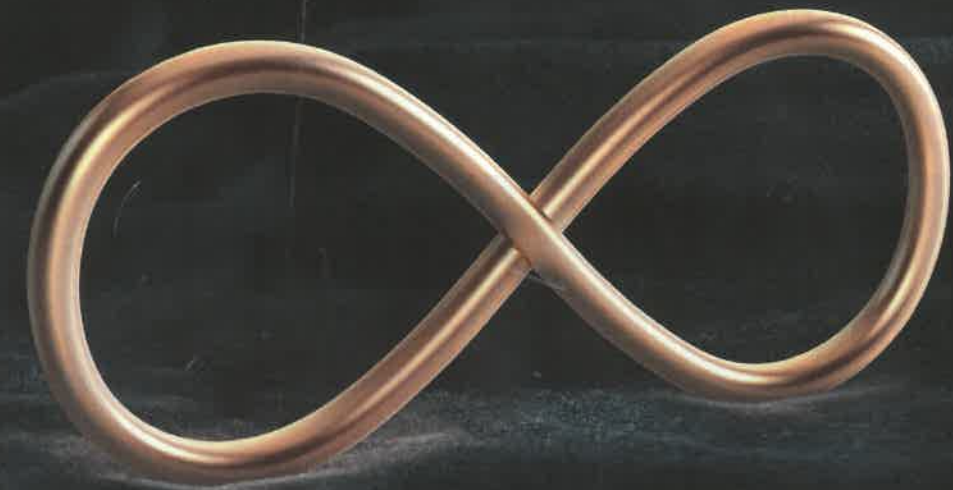
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