ACEA 2012

Although it is far too early to be worrying about Christmas it is not too soon to start thinking about the impact of ACEA 2012 on your business. By December 22nd 2014 any oil that is being marketed and claiming to meet ACEA standards must meet the latest revision of the sequences known as ACEA 2012.

Before thinking about what has changed in this latest revision let's consider what hasn't.

Firstly, any oil development has to have a full set of data collected from accredited laboratories. Your additive supplier should look after this for you but it is important that you stick strictly to the approved formulation and this includes the selection of base oils used.

Secondly, before claims against ACEA sequences can be made the marketer has to sign the European Engine Lubricants Quality Management System (EELQMS) oil marketer's Letter of Conformance details of which can be found on the ATIEL website (www.atiel.org).

Thirdly, where claims are made that an oil meets the requirements of an ACEA sequence the packaging label and any product literature must make it clear what Class and Category are being claimed e.g. A3/B4 or E7, though not the year of the revision.

Lastly, although claims against the ACEA oil sequences are made on a self-certification basis, marketers are asked to register these claims on the ACEA website (http://acea.dossier-on-web.com/eor/engine-oil-registrations/menu/eor/front-page) and to remove them when they are no longer needed. Although this requirement was in the previous sequences (ACEA 2010) it has only recently been implemented.

So what's new in ACEA 2012.

Although there are no new or deleted sequences and there are only very few changes to the physical and chemical characteristics of the oils, a number of new bench and engine tests have been introduced to reflect the greater prevalence of biofuels and some concern over the low temperature performance of oils especially once they have been in use for a period.

One new bench test assesses the low temperature pumpability of oils that that have been artificially aged. This is a requirement in all ACEA categories except A3/B3. A second new test rates the ability of an oil to resist oxidation in the presence of biodiesl for A5/B5 and all the "C" categories.

Two new engine tests have been introduced, DV6C (medium temperature dispersivity) and OM646Bio (effects of biodiesel) while a couple of other engines tests have either been upgraded or had their range extended.

Taken together this has meant a great deal of new testing has had to be done by the additive companies and in some cases a degree of reformulation.

The specific details of these changes cannot be dealt with in this short article but you are encouraged to talk to your additive supplier to see where they stand or if you really want chapter and verse try the ACEA website (http://www.acea.be/publications/article/acea-oil-sequences-2012) for more information.

For now the message is simple. You know how Christmas can creep up on you and cause a last minute panic, so don't let that happen with ACEA 2012.

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