Freudenberg-NOK expands material production site in Schwalmstadt

Freudenberg-NOK Sealing Technologies is continuing to build its global fluid power position through significant investments at its Schwalmstadt, Germany, material production site. The facility produces the company's new polyurethane and other materials that are used at Freudenberg-NOK plants, including the Troy, OH, USA, location.

Over the past year, **Freudenberg-NOK** has invested more than USD 6.5 million in Schwalmstadt, including USD 5.2 million for a new raw material production facility to manufacture polyurethane. Schwalmstadt's production space, approximately 4,700 square feet, is dedicated to the development, production and marketing of a variety of elastomer and polyurethane materials, and to the production of hydraulic and pneumatic seals used in fluid power applications. The plant also ships the polyurethane material to the Troy facility for fluid power component production. Both Schwalmstadt and Troy produce components using compression, transfer and injection moulding processes.

Earlier this year Freudenberg-NOK introduced a new polyurethane material that addresses crucial fluid power challenges, such as more aggressive environments, higher temperatures and longer equipment operating periods. The material is more resistant to water and synthetic hydraulic fluids, and withstands major temperature fluctuations better than existing polyurethanes, according to **Dr. Jurgen Hieber,** head of Material Development in Schwalmstadt.

Freudenberg-NOK says seals made from the new polyurethane offer manufacturers the ability to meet diverse working conditions without maintaining an inventory of different components, such as hydraulic cylinders that address unique environmental demands. With a standard operating range of –35 °C to +120 °C, the material stays flexible at low temperatures and stable at high temperatures. In fact, the company targeted prolonged thermal resistance in developing the new polyurethane. Through polymer engineering, this new material has been developed by making use of an advanced molecular architecture that favours viscoelastic material behaviour, says the manufacturer.

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