

1992

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Doerr, R.; Emat, D.; Howard, F.; Kujak, S.; Lambert, D.; Schafer, R.; and Steinke, D., "Compatibility of Refrigerants and Lubricants with Motor Materials" (1992). *International Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Conference*. Paper 213.
<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/iracc/213>

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COMPATIBILITY OF REFRIGERANTS AND
LUBRICANTS WITH MOTOR MATERIALS

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The electric motor sealed in the hermetic refrigeration system has a reputation for trouble-free operation over a 30-60 year lifetime. Cooling of the motor is accomplished through direct contact with the refrigerant and lubricant. As new refrigerant and synthetic lubricants are developed, testing must be done to insure that these replacements for the CFC's, HCFC-22 and mineral oil will be compatible with the electric motor materials. These materials must resist long term deterioration as well as maintaining their dielectric strength saturated with the refrigerant.

The goal of this project is to test 24 representative motor materials with 11 pure refrigerant and 17 refrigerant-lubricant combinations. Exposure will be in pressure vessels for 500 hours. Exposure testing will begin April 1992 and be completed by April 1993.

MOTOR MATERIALS

The motor materials to be evaluated are as follows:

Magnet Wire

Modified polyester overcoated with polyamide imide, as described in Section MW 73 of NEMA Standard MW 1000.

Modified polyester overcoated with polyamide imide and epoxy saturated glass as described in Section MW 73 and MW 46 of NEMA Standard MW 1000.

Polyester imide overcoated with polyamide imide.

Varnishes

U-475-EH solvent epoxy
Y-390-PG solvent epoxy-phenolic
ER-610 93% solids epoxy
Y-833 100% solids VPI epoxy
923 solvent epoxy
Isopoxy 800 water-borne epoxy

Sheet Insulation, Slot Liners
and Phase Separators

Nomex-Mylar-Nomex
Dacron-Mylar-Dacron
Mylar MO
Nomex 410
Nomex Mica 418
Melinex 228

Spiral Wrapped Sleeving Insulation

Nomex
Mylar
Nomex-Mylar

Lead Wire Insulation

Dacron-Mylar-Dacron
Dacron-Teflon-Mylar-Dacron

Tapes

Heat Cleaned Glass
Heat Shrinkable Braided Polyester
Permacel P247 glass-acrylic

Tie Cords

Polyester

REFRIGERANTS AND LUBRICANTS

The 11 pure refrigerants and 17 refrigerant-lubricant combinations are listed below. Exposure will be for 500 hours in four Parr bombs for each pure refrigerant or refrigerant-lubricant combination.

Pure Refrigerants

500 hours at 60°C (140°F)

R-32, R-125, R-143a

500 hours at 90°C (194°F)

R-134a, R-22, R-152a, R-142b, R-124, R-123, R-11 alternative, E134 alternative

Refrigerant-Lubricant Combination

500 hours at 127°C (260°F)

R-32 with pentaerythritol branched acid ester
R-32 with polypropylene glycol butyl monoether
R-125 with pentaerythritol branched acid ester
R-125 with polypropylene glycol butyl monoether
R-125 with polyalkylene glycol fluorinated alkyl ether
R-143a with pentaerythritol branched acid ester
R-134a with polypropylene glycol butyl monoether
R-134a with polypropylene glycol diol
R-134a with polyalkylene glycol fluorinated alkyl ether
R-134a with pentaerythritol branched acid ester
R-134a with pentaerythritol mixed acid ester
R-22 with naphthenic mineral oil
R-152a with alkylbenzene lubricant
R-142b with alkylbenzene lubricant
R-124 with alkylbenzene lubricant
R-11 alt. with pentaerythritol branched acid ester
E134 alt. with ?

COMPATIBILITY EVALUATIONS

After the 500 hour exposure materials will be evaluated in regard to changes in weight, visual appearances, flexibility, dielectric strength, and for some materials tensile strengths. In addition, the three magnet wires will be fabricated into single strands, twisted pairs, and helical coils. These fabricated samples will be dipped and baked with one of the six varnishes. After exposure the appropriate coated magnet wire samples will be measured for changes in weight, appearance, flexibility, dielectric breakdown voltage, burnout voltage, and bond strength.

Results after the 500 hour exposure to refrigerant or refrigerant-lubricant combination will be compared to measurements taken on unexposed samples and samples exposed to nitrogen for 500 hours at the test temperature. This will discern the effect of heat as compared with refrigerant or lubricant. In addition to measurements taken immediately after exposure to the refrigerant, exposed samples will be evaluated after baking at 150°C. This will ascertain the effect of refrigerant desorption on the measured properties.

This is a comprehensive compatibility study of motor materials and refrigerants. There will be over 600 motor material samples for each of the 11 refrigerants and 17 refrigerant-lubricant combinations, resulting in over 18,000 samples for the project.

RESULTS

Preliminary results from the compatibility testing of electric motor materials with the first refrigerants and refrigerant-lubricants will be presented at the 1992 International Refrigeration Congress at Purdue University on July 17. Additional information will be presented in January 1993 at the Chicago ASHRAE Meeting. The final report will be submitted to ARTI by April 30, 1993, and will be in the public domain.