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ENERSOL RESTRUCTURES

Enersol has undergone an organisation restructure after the departure of Mr De Silva. It is our pleasure to announce the appointment of Miss Lisa Henretty in the role of Business Manager and of Mr Hung Truong in the role of Technical Manager.

Lisa and Hung have a long history with Enersol, with a combined service of over 25 years! They are intimately familiar with both the company and the industry.

Both Lisa and Hung have extensive knowledge of the testing procedures, standards and specifications relevant to Enersol's operations and have backgrounds in Science and IT. Hung has also visited numerous condom factories and government laboratories to perform equipment installation, maintenance, calibration and customer training.

Enersol continues to focus on the innovation of advanced product testing instruments and the provision of the highest quality and proficiency testing services through our Sydney and Penang offices.

You may contact Lisa or Hung via email, skype, phone or fax regarding any of your queries, Enersol also encourages your feedback.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

ENERSOL Australia is now accredited to perform the following tests in addition to condoms, gloves and syringes:

Female Condoms

Hot Water Bottles

Tampons Rubber Bands

IUDs

Catheters

Prophylactic Dams

Additionally, ENERSOL also conducts testing on a variety of other products. Contact us for more details.

ENERSOL STAFF PROFILE - "AZMI"



Name: Azmi Hassan

Position: Operations
Manager

Location: Enersol Sdn Bhd,
Penang, Malaysia

Azmi joined Enersol in December 2007, and is responsible for all aspects of the Penang Laboratory operations.

Duties include logistics, and testing operations. At present, Azmi runs an office with a staff of five.

He previously worked for 11 years in the industry, with Baxter Healthcare, and attained experience in production of latex gloves.

Azmi also has 6 years at Braun Medical under his belt, working in the manufacture of IV equipment and medical devices.

Other Facts: He is a fan of Manchester United.

THE LATEST ADVANCEMENTS IN CONDOM TESTING TECHNOLOGY....

ENERSOL Conductivity Leaks Testers

ENERSOL is proud to announce the newest condom testing equipment available for freedom from holes testing.

The 3rd generation Ultra Fast Conductivity Leaks Tester is now available. Along with the "user-friendly" upgrades to operator controls, the system is also quieter, has a more accurate delivery system with an illuminated operation chamber and overall, the UFCLT is easier to maintain than its predecessors. The new design also allows for a larger range of condoms to be tested.

ENERSOL has also released a new version of the 10 head Electrical Leaks Tester! This new version has a completely different look to previous models. The tester has increased visibility for the rear row of samples and a greater distance between samples for easier loading and unloading. It also comes with an unrolling device and rolling table.

The new ENERSOL conductivity leaks testers are advancements in ENERSOL's growing range of state-of-the-art testing equipment for medical devices.

ENERSOL's range of equipment now also includes:

- Latex Swelling Index Tester
- Silicone Tube Inflation Tester

For more information on the conductivity leaks testers or any of ENERSOL's equipment or services, please contact Lisa or Hung.

ENERSOL INTERLABORATORY PROFICIENCY TRIALS, 2009

GLOVES: The 2009 glove trial final report and individual lab reports have been issued. If your report has not arrived, please contact the interlab trials team.

CONDOMS: The trial is currently in the data-analysis phase. Contact the interlab trials team if there are any enquiries.

DROP IN RUBBER CONSUMPTION

Global rubber consumption and production are at their lowest points in years, according to the July-September Rubber Statistical Bulletin and Rubber Industry Report issued by the International Rubber Study Group.

Global rubber consumption was 20.8 million metric tons in the year to June 2009, its lowest level since June 2005, according to the IRSG. Year-on-year consumption for June 2009 fell 12.3 percent. This compares with the growth rate of -3.5 percent in March 2002, at the height of the last global recession, the IRSG said.

Global synthetic rubber production fell 13.7 percent in year-on-year terms in June 2009, while global natural rubber production declined 3.7 percent, the reports said. Because NR consumption has declined faster than production, however, the NR market had a slight surplus in June 2009.

In the 2009 calendar year, NR consumption will fall 5.5 percent and SR consumption 7.3 percent, according to the IRSG.

ACCC ENFORCEMENT OF HOT WATER BOTTLE REGULATIONS

Australian statistics show that there has been a significant increase in the number of injuries from hot water bottles in recent years. The Australian Consumer and Competition Commission (ACCC) and equivalent State bodies have sought to reduce these injuries by regulating the quality of hot water bottles on the Australian market.

The regulations imposed involve mandatory compliance with parts of the 2006 edition of BS 1970, for hot water bottles. Requirements involve minimum thickness, a minimum filling opening, a filling funnel of at least 60 ml, minimum seam strength, tests on the stopper seal and the pressure resistance of the bottle. Some of these, such as applying a load of 500 N between the stopper and the bottle, then filling it with water and cyclically applying a compressive load of 900 N to the bottle, are quite severe.

This year, a number of products have been tested by various labs, including Enersol, at the behest of a number of Australian Government bodies, and many brands have been withdrawn from the market. *(continued on page 4)*

A STEP BACK IN TIME....

A history of latex production in Alabama

By Dr John Gerofi, with thanks to Lon McIlvain

Alabama was the centre for condom manufacture in the US for a very long time. Originally, there was a strong commercial market for the products, but also a large proportion went to USAID for distribution in developing countries. Akwell held the sole contract for USAID condoms, and supplied between 300 million and over a billion per year.

Akwell (a subsidiary of G. D. Searle) owned the big condom factory in Dothan, and there was a subsidiary factory in Troy. Primarily, they used very large, fast, dipping machines, many of which could be converted to produce gloves. Both factories produced both products.

In 1981, the Australian company, Ansell, bought Akwell. As part of the inevitable management changes some Akwell employees left the company after the takeover. Some of them got together and founded Aladan, another condom and glove manufacturer, in about 1986. *(continued on page 4)*

ACCC ENFORCEMENT OF HOT WATER BOTTLE REGULATIONS..

Continued from page 3

The British standard appears to be written more as a design guide than as a regulatory instrument.

The hot water bottle industry consists of many factories, principally in Asia, who have varied understanding levels in terms of quality control.

It appears that many do not understand the main basic concepts of batch traceability, and they do not have detailed records of quality control procedures. Similarly, many Australian hot water bottle importers are not accustomed to dealing with regulated devices, and as a result the Governments' testing and recall activities have come as an expensive shock to them.

A STEP BACK IN TIME.... *Continued from page 3*

As a small company under the provisions of US law, Aladan was able to demand and get a proportion of the USAID business. Gradually, Ansell lost the USAID business to Aladan, who became the dominant supplier to USAID.

Ansell continued to operate the Dothan factory, but in the late 1990s, it had bought the Suretex condom factories in Bangalore, India and Surat Thani, Thailand. Ansell undertook massive expansion in Surat Thani, and subsequently ceased condom manufacture in Dothan in 1999. Nonetheless, to this day, it maintains a packing operation there. Ansell's medical glove manufacture went to its factories in Malaysia and Thailand.

In 1997, Aladan was sold to LIG (now SSL). Although LIG had a high and uniform standard of production in its other factories, it was not able to bring the Eufaula factory up to the standard of the other factories. Finally, in 2000, the factory was sold to a company called CSI, which was previously a condom importer dealing principally with Guilin Latex in China. CSI operated the Eufaula factory through its subsidiary, LMR.

But by 2001, there were threats to its continued existence. LMR's main market was USAID, and the enormous price difference between condoms made in Asia and those made in the US was taking its toll. The condom factories of Alabama had survived because of the Buy America Act, requiring the US Government to source from US manufacturers wherever possible. The extent of the price difference (a factor of between 2 and 3) was a very telling argument, and there was open talk of not applying the Act to condom purchases. By 2005, there were GMP audit problems with the FDA, and LMR began having problems meeting USAID's requirements. LMR became insolvent in 2005.

Alatech was established by other ex-Ansell (and Aladan) people in 1999, as a very small supplier, and did what Aladan had done years earlier. It got a share of the USAID market by virtue of being a small company, and then its share grew. It began to rent the old Ansell factory, complete with the old machines, to get enough capacity to make the USAID order. Once LMR ceased operations, Alatech took over their factory in Eufaula, and the USAID condom production.

Finally, in 2006, USAID began to buy condoms in Asia. First the amount was small, but in 2009, it transferred the majority of its purchasing to Asia, leaving Alatech virtually without work. Alatech appealed, and eventually, in August 2009 it was granted a small USAID order, ending in November 2009.

Alatech later announced that it had made an agreement with Vystar to make condoms from its deproteinised latex. The product, called Envy, has received USFDA approval, and will be in competition with synthetic isoprene condoms from Ansell and SSL. Time will tell whether this new product will mean the revival of condom manufacture in Alabama. The Church and Dwight factory in Virginia is the only other major producer left in the USA.

FUNNY PAGES

On the WWWeb...

Miss Australia Wins Condom-Blowing Competition

<http://bit.ly/2iviMD>

New Bollywood film features giant red condom

<http://bit.ly/4BSj8V>

Condom Stuffing Parties

<http://bit.ly/4DxXWQ>

World's Ten Best Condom Advertisements

<http://bit.ly/51ar7>

Your contributions are welcome...

ENERSOL's International Newsletter is produced as a service to the latex industry. If you have any news or views you would like to contribute please send them to us by e-mail to jgerofi@enersol.com.au or by fax +612 9552 1709.

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An idea not coupled with action will never get any bigger than the brain cell it occupied.

~ Arnold H Glasgo