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New OK Tire location to merge tire, quick lube service

Construction underway for LEED-approved facility

By: Adam Ledlow

ETOBICOKE, Ont. -- OK Tire is constructing an environmentally-friendly facility that promises to be an "evolution in commercial tire service," according to company officials. The Etobicoke-based location will merge the company's traditional tire service with rapid lube capabilities, in addition to a variety of other services.

"It has been a natural progression over time from our traditional tire routes," said Darryl Croft, part-owner of the OK Tire location. "We gradually expanded our offerings to our clients; we first went into alignment, brakes and safeties. The only thing we didn't have was a modern rapid lube capability. That was the next step, and that is where we contacted Jerry."

Jerry Steele is president of California-based Integrated Lube Services, the makers and distributors of the Envirolube: an all fibreglass, modular shield used with the tanks at the OK location.

"What (Envirolube) does is it does not let any fluids of any type to permeate through the fibreglass. It is all modular, so it can be applied in any length of building and in numerous configurations," Steele says. "It is environmentally sound, and we did the research to get LEED approval (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). It is approved for that, so if you are building an all-green building, then you will get points for using for that for using the Envirolube towards your LEED certification.

"It is fully equipped on the interior; all of the grease and the oil dispensing are all built into the interior of the facility, so when it goes into the ground, as we have it here today, all of the lube equipment is in it. This one is equipped with rolling jacks and rolling drain carts, and all of those are included in our system. It is very bright and is all gel-coat white fiberglass on the interior. The lighting makes it very bright and easy for the technicians to work on."

The Etobicoke facility will be the first OK Tire location in the country to use the Envirolube technology, though the OK group recently approved Envirolube as its national supplier with 270 locations across Canada.

Representing Envirolube in Canada is the Alemite Sales Group, who introduced Croft to the environmentally-friendly technology to begin with.

"We do full cradle to the grave systems for truck shops and car shops including pumps - oil pumps, grease pumps, reel hoses, waste oil systems, and installation," said Gene Lauber, district manager of Southern Ontario for Alemite. "This is how we attract ourselves to new opening shops - we let them know what we have available. Jerry we met in California at one of the big truck shows down there, and that is how we started our relationship with him. We brought it to Canada thinking that this is a very good way to develop new Envirolube pits and service bays in Ontario."

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Croft says one of the main draws for customers to the new facility will be the convenience of a one-stop shop for maintenance and repair services.

"At this site, traditionally, the services that we offered were offered in individual segments in the market - tires were done in one area, alignments were done at another shop, quick lube was done at another shop," he said. "This project unites a spring shop, tires, alignment, and quick lube all under one roof, which is pretty unique. There are not that many facilities that do it all very well. It is going to be very convenient for a client to come in and get all of his work and maintenance and repair needs met in one stop."

In the quick lube area, Croft estimates a 40-60 truck per day capacity, while a total of 14 bays will be available for truck repair. OK Tire has also been in discussions with such oil companies as Shell, Delo and Mobile for continued service at the new location.

"Our new facility was a long-term investment, and we wanted to do what was right for tomorrow as well as today. Even though there may be a more up-front cost, in the long-term we feel that it is cleaner, brighter, more efficient, and more attractive to consumers. It made sense for us," Croft said.

The completion date for the site's construction is set for March.