



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AS EPA'S COPPER-FREE BRAKE INITIATIVE MOVES TO NEXT PHASE,
BENDIX OFFERS REMINDERS AND PRODUCT UPDATES

Current and Forthcoming Brake Pads Provide Compliance as Older Friction Becomes Obsolete

ELYRIA, Ohio – Dec. 3, 2020 – With the first phase of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Copper-Free Brake Initiative coming to a close at the end of the year, Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC reminds fleets and owner-operators to make sure they're keeping up with the necessary changes in aftermarket air disc brake (ADB) friction formulation. Bendix, the North American leader in the development and manufacture of active safety, air management, and braking solutions for commercial vehicles, was already offering compliant friction years ahead of the 2021 deadline, but some older, noncompliant pads will no longer be available.

"It's important that fleets, distributors, and everyone who does brake pad changes is aware of what's going on with various Bendix replacement pads and labeling," said Keith McComsey, Bendix director, Air Disc Brake & Systems. "And with the significant increase in ADB adoption over the past decade, there's a particular interest in ADB pad changes."

The Copper-Free Brake Initiative

Almost six years ago, in January 2015, organizations within the automotive and commercial vehicle industries – including trucking – signed onto the Copper-Free Brake Initiative, along with the EPA and the Environmental Council of the States. This action was taken because copper from stormwater runoff can be harmful to the environment, affecting

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plants and animals – and when used in brake pads, it makes its way into the air and water through the fine dust released from friction during braking. (Copper is not the only material covered: The agreement also reduces the use of other substances in brake pads, including mercury, lead, asbestos, chromium-six salts, and cadmium.)

While those dust particles may not seem like a big deal, they add up: In 2010, according to EPA estimates, vehicular braking in California alone released 1.3 million pounds of copper into the environment. That year, both California and Washington passed laws reducing the amount of copper permitted in brake pads – a move that Bendix commended for its positive environmental impact. Even then, most Bendix brake friction was already compliant with the requirements that wouldn't take effect for several years.

The Copper-Free Brake Initiative agreement outlined changes to come in the composition of brake friction nationwide: A-Level compliance started Jan. 1, 2015; the legal maximum amount of cadmium in a brake pad formula could be no more than 0.01% (one-hundredth of 1%) of its weight. For asbestos, chromium-six salts, lead, and mercury, the limit was 0.10% – one-tenth of 1%. Copper limits were not specified as part of A-Level compliance.

Second Phase and Bendix ADB Changes

B-Level compliance (or the second phase of the agreement) takes effect Jan. 1, 2021, and limits the amount of copper to no more than 5% by weight. Other material limits remain unchanged. In January 2025, copper's limit will drop to 0.5% – one-half of 1% – by weight for N-Level compliance. The agreement also commits participants to taking steps to educate the automotive and trucking industries on the changes, and provides guidelines for marking and labeling friction material packaging and products.

“Even though many Bendix friction materials have been compliant with the 2021 standards for a long time, some older aftermarket ADB pads will be phasing out of compliance at the end of the year,” McComsey said. “For customers currently using these, we've been including postcards with the replacement kits letting them know about the change and pointing them to the compliant friction.”

The A-Level-compliant frictions, which include both the Bendix® BX275™ OE-level friction and the aftermarket BA235™, will become obsolete. The suitable B-Level copper-compliant replacements are the Bendix® BX276™ and BX283™ pads, which are OE-level pads already available in the North American market. Both will remain compliant through 2024, while providing longer friction life and meeting FMVSS-121 stopping distance and park hold

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requirements. Bendix will also launch the BA236™ pad in 2021, an aftermarket friction that will be B-Level copper-compliant through 2024.

Bendix parts and replacement kit numbers involved are:

- BX275™ (K070796) – obsolete Dec. 31, 2020
- BA235™ (K182235) – obsolete Dec. 31, 2020
- BX276™ (K129276) – available; compliant through 2024
- BX283™ (K109113) – available; compliant through 2024
- BA236™ (K182236) – coming in 2021; compliant through 2024

Delivering for the Future

“When Phase 3 of the initiative rolls around on Jan. 1, 2025, Bendix will be ready for that too,” McComsey said. “We’re already engineering copper-compliant ADB friction for the most stringent level, with plans for production to begin well in advance of the deadline.”

Worldwide, Bendix and its parent company, the Munich, Germany-based Knorr-Bremse, maintain global leadership in ADB production at over 45 million and counting.

Bendix wheel-end solutions include air disc and drum brake systems, automatic slack adjusters, spring brakes, friction, and remanufactured brake shoes that provide lower total cost of ownership while delivering on safety, stopping power, and reliability. Bendix helps fleets and drivers in the areas most critical to their success by improving vehicle performance and efficiency, and by backing its products with unparalleled post-sales support. By strengthening return on investment in the technologies that improve vehicle and driver safety, Bendix supports safer North American roads for all who share them.

About Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC

Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, a member of Knorr-Bremse, develops and supplies leading-edge active safety technologies, energy management solutions, and air brake charging and control systems and components under the Bendix® brand name for medium- and heavy-duty trucks, tractors, trailers, buses, and other commercial vehicles throughout North America. An industry pioneer, employing more than 4,100 people, Bendix is driven to deliver solutions for improved vehicle safety, performance, and overall operating cost. Contact us at 1-800-AIR-BRAKE (1-800-247-2725) or visit bendix.com. Stay connected and informed through Bendix expert podcasts, blog posts, videos, and other resources at knowledge-dock.com. Follow Bendix on Twitter at twitter.com/Bendix_CVS. Log on and learn from the Bendix experts at brake-school.com. And to learn more about career opportunities at Bendix, visit bendix.com/careers.

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