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Introduction to This Series

Troubleshooting problems in wire and cable production can be very frustrating. Steps that are taken to correct a problem at one time may not resolve the same problem the next time it occurs. This inconsistency may be the result of the many variables associated with wire and cable production, including the material used, the extrusion process and the design of equipment, from the cooling troughs and sheaves through the take-up.

However, once a product is successfully produced and all related parameters established, then problems can be identified and resolved. As in any industry, in wire and cable, there is no substitute for experience and a troubleshooting guide, especially if the guide is written as problems occur and are solved, so that similar problems can be handled in the future, without unnecessary trial and error.

Recommendations in this troubleshooting guide are based on the following assumptions:

1. The problem to be solved is not the result of the start-up of a new line or equipment.
2. The problem to be solved has not occurred during a trial run of new, "not previously approved" material.
3. The problem to be solved is not the result of slowly deteriorating equipment on the line (even though resolution of the problem of poor equipment may be found in this guide).

4. The problem to be solved is not the result of processing changes to increase line speeds or throughput. However, the consequences of these changes, such as rough surface, are addressed in this guide.
5. All references are to polyethylene, unless otherwise noted.

The problems addressed by this troubleshooting guide are arranged in separate sections so that additional material can be inserted under the appropriate subject heading as Equistar's Cincinnati Technology Center develops new solutions to existing problems. Additionally, notes on solutions that you develop or come across can be added to the guide. Keep track of your trials, errors and successes. Write down solutions as they occur, include as much detail as possible and make sure that this information is readily available to others who need it.

In trying to find solutions to problems in an organized way, follow the procedure below. Remember:

- Make only one change to the process or equipment at a time.
- After making a change, allow time for the change to have an effect. Don't let the pressures of production prevent you from reaching a conclusion about the effectiveness of your change in procedure or conditions. Record the results of all changes.

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