



Hendrickson AIRTEK & SOFTEK Front Suspension

Service Update #24-1215



Preventative Maintenance Tips

Recently Hendrickson did a class on maintenance with their suspensions and steer axles. From that there were some notable takeaways which we thought would be useful for operators with the AIRTEK or SOFTTEK steer axles.

Attached is the page from their “Technical Procedures” document #17730-248 concerning maintenance on their steer axles.

Notable Points:

- The kingpin is an integral part of the axle and cannot be replaced separately.
- The kingpin thrust bearings are different from side to side as the left side has a composite bearing and the right is a steel roller bearing..
- Use of the composite bearing and the addition of a “Purge Vent” in the steel bearing changes how proper greasing is done. Unlike conventional kingpins, when greasing, the vehicle should be on the ground and not suspended.

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KINGPIN LUBRICATION

STEERTEK NXT upper kingpin grease zerks are located on the inboard side of the steering knuckle and upper kingpin connection, see Figure 7-1. Models of the STEERTEK NXT a grease Zerk is located on the bottom of lower steering knuckle.

STEERTEK kingpin grease zerks are located on the top and bottom of the kingpin grease caps.

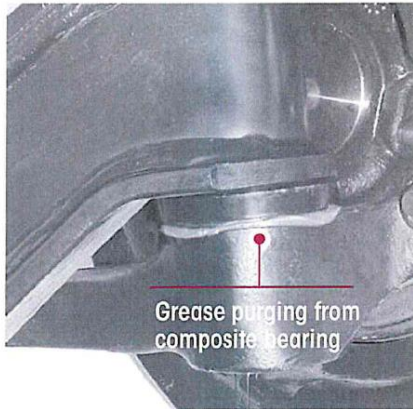
1. Place vehicle on the ground.
2. Prior to greasing the kingpins on the vehicle, the suspension must be in a loaded condition.
3. Clean off all the grease zerks and grease gun tip with a clean shop towel prior to lubrication.
4. Lubricate the kingpins through the grease zerks on the top and bottom of the steering knuckle, see Lubrication Specification Table 7-1.
5. Force the required lubricant into the upper and lower kingpin grease zerks, until new lubricant flows out from the upper kingpin connection and steering knuckle and the thrust bearing purge locations, see Figures 7-2 and 7-3.

FIGURE 7-1

STEERTEK NXT
Upper Grease Zerk

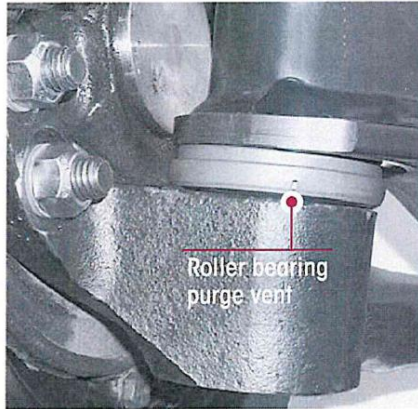


FIGURE 7-2



Grease purging from composite bearing

FIGURE 7-3



Roller bearing purge vent

NOTE

Greasing at the lower zerk should purge grease from the thrust bearing shell. The STEERTEK NXT • STEERTEK axle on Blue Bird buses are equipped with a composite style thrust bearing on left side and steel roller thrust bearing on the right side, see Figures 7-4 and 7-5. Both purge in the same area.

FIGURE 7-4

Top View of Thrust Bearings

Black Seal



Composite – Left Side

FIGURE 7-5

Seal



Roller – Right Side

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