

Home detergent market

Suppliers of surfactants to the household products industry must provide efficient, economical materials and extensive technical service, Arno Cahn told more than 200 persons attending a joint meeting in October of the Northeast Section of the AOCS and the New York chapter of the Society of Cosmetic Chemists.

Household detergents average about 0.2% surfactant concentration; by the time the powder is dissolved in water, the concentration can be 0.03% to 0.1% surfactant, indicating how efficient a surfactant must be. Cahn said household products usually are composed of surfactants, builders, auxiliary ingredients (color, fragrance, etc.), inert ingredients and water. Surfactant usage in such products is about 2.1 billion pounds a year in household products, with a similar or greater usage in institutional and industrial cleaning products, Cahn said.

Since the 1940s, several thousand surfactants have been developed, but relatively few have been successful, he said. Cahn identified five as "work horse" surfactants: soap, LAS, AE, AES and ditallow-methylammonium salts. The latter four have been in use since the late 1950s or early 1960s, he said.

A good cost/performance ratio is a must for a successful surfactant in household products, Cahn said, as the consumer market is very price-dependent. Surfactant manufacturers must supply a product of uniform quality that will be compatible with other ingredients in the formulation. "Suppliers provide a lot of technical service," Cahn said. "They do a lot of R&D work on formulation and in response to the needs of their customers."

Often suppliers virtually custom make surfactants for their customers, he said. Some suppliers have been servicing specific customers for 30 or 40 years, Cahn said, providing stability to the industry.

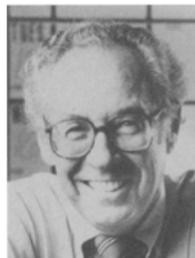
Surfactant market growing

A marketing research study by Colin A. Houston & Associates of Mamaroneck, New York, predicts the West European market for surfactants in industrial and institutional cleaners and industrial process aids will grow to 700,000 metric tons (MT) by 1990. The study estimated the 1985 market in West Europe at 650,000 MT, representing a manufacturers' level value of over \$700 million.

Currently, the marketing research firm said, the West European market consumes 360,000 MT of anionic products, 220,000 MT of nonionic products and 70,000 MT of cationic and other products. Major industrial process aid uses include agricultural chemicals, cement, food, paints, plastics and textiles. The markets for industrial and institutional cleaners include dry cleaning, hard surface cleaning, dish-washing, metal cleaning, commercial laundering, food

industry cleaning and rug cleaning. According to the study, new business opportunities exist in both segments as a result of marketing, environmental and technical shifts.

The report also includes a review of environmental issues for these markets. "Concern over the biodegradability and toxicity of alkylphenol residues will definitely lead to new product introductions," according to Malcolm McLaughlin, project leader on the study.



Paul Duke



Arthur Miller



Frank Capiello

SDA program set

The Soap and Detergent Association's 59th annual meeting will feature presentations on nonionic surfactants, phosphonates and the role of polymers in cleaning formulations.

The meeting will be held Jan. 30-Feb. 2, 1986, at the Boca Raton Hotel and Club in Boca Raton, Florida.

Technical topics will be covered primarily in concurrent sessions Friday, Feb. 1. Scheduled speakers include Kevin Dillan, researcher with Tergitol Surfactants of Union Carbide, on new formulating potential by controlling ethoxylate distribution of nonionic surfactant; Robert A. Klein, manager of marketing surfactants for Vista Chemical Co., on economic impact of the strength of the American dollar; Henri B. May of Monsanto Europe's Technical Center in Belgium on phosphonates as multifunctional ingredients for laundry detergents, and George T. McGrew, Alco Chemical Corp.'s vice president for technology, on the role of polymers in cleaning formulations. Another paper will discuss cuphea, a plant being studied as a potential source of oleochemical feedstocks.

Nontechnical speakers include Senate Majority Whip Alan K. Simpson (R-Wyoming); Frank Capiello, president of an investment advisory firm; Paul Duke, senior correspondent for public television in Washington, D.C., and Arthur R. Miller, law professor at Harvard University, who has appeared on numerous television programs. A prominent Democrat also is expected to speak, but confirmation had not been received as of press time.

The SDA is a national trade group, founded in 1926, whose members manufacture well over 90% of

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the soaps and detergents produced in the United States each year. Member companies include firms that produce consumer products as well as the suppliers of raw materials and intermediates used in production.

Edmund Halley's comet and soap

There is, believe it or not, a connection between Halley's comet and soap.

Derek York, geophysicist and professor at the University of Toronto, wrote an article for a Toronto newspaper earlier this year noting that a newspaper called *The Gazette* carried the following item on April 17, 1864:

"A true Discovery of Mr. Edmund Halley of London—Merchant who was found Barbarously Murthered (sic) at Temple-Farm, near Rochester in Kent."

This Edmund Halley, however, was the father of the astronomer. The elder Halley was a soapmaker who had encouraged his son to acquire a good education, York said, and financed a scientific expedition to St. Helena for his son.

York's report went on to note that it was Halley's interest in planetary motion, and his attempts to understand how such motion was regulated, that led Halley to discussions in November of 1864 with Isaac Newton that eventually led to Newton agreeing to prepare a book. That book, which took 18 months' collaboration with Newton writing and Halley supervising production and proofreading, was Newton's *Principia*. York says that without Halley's interest, it is unlikely Newton would ever have written what has become a scientific classic.

Chevron Chemical expands

Chevron Chemical Co. has announced plans for a 50-million pounds per year expansion of the alpha olefins plant operated by its Olefins and Derivatives Division at Cedar Bayou, Texas. The expansion, slated to begin early in 1986, is expected to be completed and onstream during the third quarter of the year. Annual capacity at the facility will be boosted from 200 to 250 million pounds.

Italy eyes phosphate ban

An Italian Senate committee in August approved curbs on phosphate content in detergents, just a month after a Swiss ban on detergent phosphates was announced. The committee outlined a plan setting a 2.5% ceiling in 1986, followed by a further reduction to 1% in 1987.

Stepan promotions

Stepan Co. has promoted Donald E. Oulman to the position of plant engineer for its Winder, Georgia, facility. Oulman joined Stepan in 1979 and most recently had served as the company's manager of corporate process engineering. In addition, Stepan has named the following surfactant sales representatives: Noreen A. Cherry, eastern U.S. region; T. Anthony Thompson, Houston, Texas, area; Timothy L. Fitzgerald, North and South Carolina and Virginia.

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Robert W. Lippert Jr. has been named midwestern regional manager of Chemax Inc., a supplier of specialty chemicals. Lippert is based in Chicago, Illinois.

Theodore Karwat Jr. has been appointed project manager in the marketing department of PQ Corporation's Industrial Chemical Division.

Robert W. Hemwall has been appointed technical services manager, amine derivatives, for Onyx Chemical Co.

CasChem Group Inc., producer of urethane systems and castor-based chemical derivatives, announced in October that it had purchased Cosan Chemical Corp. of Carlstadt, New Jersey.

Monsanto Co. in October acquired Witco Corp.'s Witfield Division in Carson, California. The facility has an annual capacity of about 50 million pounds for linear alkylbenzenes and 25 million pounds of branched chain alkylbenzenes. The products manufactured at the facility are used primarily as surfactant intermediates in laundry and dishwashing detergents and personal care products.

China Petro-Chemical International Co. has awarded a contract to **UOP Inc.**, a unit of Signal Cos. Inc., to provide engineering design for expansion of the Nanjing alkylbenzene complex. The project is set to increase production of linear alkylbenzene at the facility from 50,000 to 72,000 metric tons.

Procter & Gamble Co. in October agreed to acquire **Richardson-Vicks Inc.**, a proprietary pharmaceutical and cosmetics concern.

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