

Ryertex

Ryertex was first introduced in the 1930's by the Joseph T. Ryerson Company, a metals distributor and processor founded in 1842.^[1] A subsidiary of Inland Steel until 1996, it became an independent company in 1999 as Ryerson Tull, Inc. The company adopted its current name in 2006 and was headquartered in Chicago, Illinois. In 2006 the company sold their plastic division to the WS Hampshire Co in Hampshire, IL. In 2008, the company was acquired by Platinum Equity, a holding company based out of Beverly Hills, California.

Ryerson applied for a patent for Ryertex on October 26, 1932⁽²⁾. Ryertex is in the phenolic thermoset laminate family that was first developed by Leo Baekeland in 1907⁽³⁾. He produced Bakelite, a nonflammable, thermoset (hard material that will not soften) utilizing a phenolic resin mixed with a paper substrate, formed under heat and pressure to produce a solid core product with very high mechanical properties that was cheaper and more versatile than other known plastics.

Product and Material Impact

Bakelite has since been used in everything from engine parts to jewelry to electronics. Other original products developed were telephone mouthpieces and ear pieces, buttons, frying pan handles and iron handles.⁽⁴⁾

During the Depression and leading into WWII, metal became a very important raw material that was needed for the war effort. Scrap metal of all types was used for airplanes, tanks and jeeps. This created a shortage of metal for industry. Ryerson introduced Ryertex as a replacement product for metal and was launched this product for a wide array of industrial uses while getting the material specified on mechanical drawings throughout industry. These drawings still exist today with Ryertex as the specified product as noted on these drawings.⁽⁵⁾

Since that time, Ryertex has expanded to include all NEMA grades with substrates including paper, cotton, linen and fiberglass using both phenolic and epoxy resin systems. Ryertex is most generally used to replace metallic parts involving high speeds, high loads and high temperatures. Ryertex has a base operating temperature of 125C / 250F up to 300C / 572F attainable by the latest version, Ryertex S/T.

Ryertex is used around the globe in a wide array of industrial applications to include rail, locomotive, off-road equipment, construction equipment, mining, gas and oil, marine, steel processing, military and paper processing to name just a few.

Ryertex is now owned by the WS Hampshire Company, Hampshire, IL USA. WS Hampshire has worked to develop and expand the product's industry accepted position as a leading phenolic in quality, price, delivery and design to meet the most demanding industrial applications. The product is now shipped to over 25 countries supporting the need for parts around the world. WS Hampshire produces all fabricated Ryertex parts in a modern, CNC fabrication operation in Hampshire, IL.

(1) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ryerson,_Inc.

(2) <http://www.boliven.com/trademark/71331659>

(3) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leo_Baekeland

(4) <http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-phenolic.htm>

(5) <http://www.plasticsindustry.org/AboutPlastics/content.cfm?ItemNumber=670>