

An Inside Look at the Amsoil Center

After a humble beginning in 1972 by founder A.J. "Al" Amazio, AMSOIL has grown into the leading aftermarket synthetic oil company. The AMSOIL name and logo is found throughout the snowmobile industry, as the company supports several racing circuits and teams.

It is the title sponsor of the Duluth National snocross race, held Thanksgiving weekend in Duluth, Minnesota. It's also the lead sponsor of the International Series of Champions (ISOC) National snocross series, the AMSOIL Championship Snocross Series, the Eagle River World Championship Snowmobile Derby in Eagle River, Wisconsin, the Vermont-based Rock Maple Racing circuit and Canadian Snowcross Racing Association.

The company also is a top sponsor for the Scheuring Speed Sports Team that employs National series Pro snocross riders Robbie Malinoski and Andrew Johnstad. National snocross team Judnick Motorsports and ice oval racing hot shot P.J. Wanderscheid also get sponsorship for the Superior-based company. AMSOIL has a presence in other sports as well. The name and logo are found in off-road truck racing, automobile racing, powerboats, monster trucks and even anglers are found sporting the name.

But cross the Richard I. Bong Memorial bridge from Duluth, Minnesota, into Superior, Wisconsin, and to the north is a white building with red and blue stripes adorning the circumference of it.

Take a closer look and you'll see AMSOIL emblazoned on the side of the building. The 400,000 square-foot building sitting on a 55.5-acre site is the AMSOIL Center, a structure that contains the company's technical services, laboratory, production and packaging, technical sales, the central warehouse, Superior distribution center, operations department, 86 storage tanks, four packaging lines, 38 loading docks, 90 transfer pumps and 85 employees.

It is the epicenter of all things AMSOIL, the synthetic oil maker and distributor that has anchored itself as the top aftermarket lubricant in the snowmobile industry. Midwest Sports Publishing Network (MSPN), the publisher of Minnesota Snowmobiling, got an up close and personal tour of



The rail car area, where raw material is delivered, is big enough to allow up to six railcars and four tanker trucks to be unloaded or loaded simultaneously.

the facility and of the AMSOIL building located in the heart of Superior.

The AMSOIL Center in its current form is relatively new. Construction to add on to the existing building began June 2007 and by November of that year, the company unloaded its first train car. The state-of-the-art facility was built for room to grow, said Scott Davis, vice president of operations. For instance, Davis said the railcar area was designed for 20 times AMSOIL's size.

The facility also was designed to take advantage of efficiency. Because the formulation of AMSOIL's synthetic lubricants requires precise mixing, a computer-controlled mixing system is employed. The blending skid pumps 150 to 200 gallons and the blending process now uses a more efficient heat transfer system, reducing energy consumption. The internal tank farm houses 56 tanks that provide one million gallons of storage. Those tanks are used to store additives and finished goods. The finished material is pumped from the internal tank farm to one of four packaging lines.

The quart packaging line is capable of bottling 180 quarts per minute. Bottles are automatically loaded onto the line, filled, capped, labeled, boxed and stacked on pallets before being shipped to one of its 14 distribution centers in North America.

Operating with one shift five days a week and pumping out gallons and gallons of synthetic oil, there's sure to be some waste generated. There is, but Davis said they are environmentally friendly. "Everything is reused or recycled," he said. ■

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