

**LUBE**

# TECHNI-GRAM



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## TROUBLESHOOTING GREASE GUNS AND PUMPS

Periodically, I receive questions or concerns about grease not pumping due to suspected “air pockets.” After asking a few pertinent questions, it is generally determined that the problem lies in the grease gun or grease pump, rather than the product itself.

The starting point for troubleshooting a complaint of the grease being difficult to pump is to first check for a recognized brand-name grease gun or grease pump. The following names are not intended as endorsements, or meant to exclude any other equipment manufacturers that may provide similar performance, but are simply names that are generally recognized as being capable of providing solid, reliable performance...

**National Spencer, Alemite, Lincoln and Graco.** Once it is determined that a customer has reasonable quality greasing equipment, the following general troubleshooting guide may aid in solving problems that might arise within the equipment:

### Manual Grease Guns

1. **When Loading with Grease Cartridge:** Remove the head from the grease container or barrel assembly. Then withdraw the plunger rod handle to the limit and push it to the side so that it engages the keyhole slot in the grease container cap. Having removed the caps at both ends of the cartridge, insert the cartridge into the barrel assembly. Replace the gun head, screwing the head on to the barrel assembly moderately tight. Then disengage the plunger rod handle and push it into the barrel assembly. The gun is then ready for use. If the gun fails to start after several strokes of the lever, unscrew the head assembly (or the filler plug on top of the head assembly) one or two turns to allow any trapped air to escape. Then again tighten the head onto the barrel assembly moderately tight.
2. **When Loading with Bulk Grease with Gun-Filling Pumps:** Remove the filler plug from the grease gun head and insert the loader nipple, which fits the adapter on the pump used, tightening same moderately. If there is an empty cartridge in the gun, remove the used cartridge, because if the cartridge is reused, it will quickly deteriorate and clog the gun. Cartridges are not designed to withstand refilling. Insert the loader nipple which is attached to the gun into the adapter on the pump, holding the plunger rod and handle in the inward position. Then, while holding the gun securely in place, operate the lever of the pump until the gun is full of grease. Do not attempt to force the filler pump after the gun is full.
3. **When Filling by Suction:** Remove the gun head from the grease container and submerge the end of same into the grease about 2”. While in this position, withdraw the plunger rod to the limit and push it to



*... to keep it running*

the side so that it engages the keyhole slot in the grease container cap. Replace the gun head and tighten same onto the barrel assembly moderately tight. Then disengage the plunger rod handle and push it into the barrel assembly. The gun is then ready for use. If the gun fails to start after several strokes of the lever, unscrew the head assembly (or filler plug) one or two turns to allow any trapped air to escape. Then again tighten the head onto the barrel assembly moderately tight.

**Operating the Gun:**

This gun is designed to pump air as well as grease, so when an air pocket is encountered, the gun will automatically pump out the air. However, if the air pocket is large, it may take several strokes of the lever to eject the air.

**Manual Grease Pump**

<b>Trouble</b>	<b>Cause</b>	<b>Remedy</b>
<b>A</b> Handle rises when not using gun	(a) Dirt trapped between inlet ball and seat. (b) Piston O-Ring defective	(a) Undo Clamp Nut, pull up assembly and clean Ball and Seat. Reassemble with spring on ball. (b) Undo Clamp Nut, pull up assembly. Replace Piston O-Ring.
<b>B</b> Handle will not rise when using gun	(a) Grade of grease too heavy. (b) Strainer blocked	(a) Use No. 2 grade of grease or lighter. Force old grease out. (b) Undo Clamp Nut. Clean Strainer with solvent and brush.
<b>C</b> Handle Springs up and will not pump grease	(a) Air locks in grease. (b) Follower Plate is not following. (c) Valve Plate dirty. (d) Piston has become detached from Piston Rod.	(a) Rap pail on ground. Push Follower down on grease and replace pump. If pail is dented, tilt Follower under the dent. (b) Replace Follower O-Ring. Check bottom of Tube and file edges smooth and round. (c) Undo Clamp Nut. Pull up assembly and clean under face of Valve Plate and top of Tube. Replace piston and rod assembly with new assembly.
<b>D</b> Grease leaks from under strainer cover	Damaged O-Ring	Undo Clamp Nut. Lever off Strainer Cover, and replace O-Ring.
<b>E</b> Follower Plate not following	Air leaks or dented Pail	See C (a) and (b).

\* For **air operated** greasing equipment, the OEM should always be contacted before any troubleshooting action is attempted.