

## **Press release:**

### ***NitraLife and BoerBoel – redefining thinking outside the nitrogen ‘box’***

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Even in these tough economic times in South Africa, it is still apparent that quality, service and sound business relationships will overcome adversity. This has been very much the nature of the relationship between local steel fabricator BoerBoel, and its customer – and supplier - nitrogen generator manufacturer NitraLife.

General Manager Dean van der Merwe explains that Boerboel started as a small factory which employed just a few people.

“However over the years, from starting out in a small facility, to a factory with an under-roof space of 3000 m<sup>2</sup>, we now employ 41 staff members. Along with this growth, we have expanded our capacity, with additional machinery including fibre laser machines and punching equipment, amongst others,” van der Merwe explains.

“When it comes to our success at BoerBoel, the bottom line is that our owner and founder Les Coetzee has always had a strong focus on customer service. We have noticed that when new customers approach us, they look first at our pricing – then at our product quality - and finally at our customer service. We therefore constantly strive to deliver the best quality - at the right price - in the shortest possible turnaround time,” he adds.

The steel fabrication business is highly competitive: “What differentiates us from others in our field is that, when it comes to sheet metal fabrication, we have the complete range of services and skills required. Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of the work that we are called on to do can be performed in-house,” he continues.

Another relevant factor to their success is that BoerBoel works closely with its clients in the development of their products, going the extra mile to ensure quality and reliability every time - particularly when these are customised items. For example, as most of the cabinets or cases which BoerBoel manufactures will contain electrical equipment, the company retains the services of a qualified electrical engineer.

NitraLife Managing Director Tom Sowry comments: “When we have needed to develop cabinets for our nitrogen generators, BoerBoel has been of great assistance to us as a customer, with helpful consultation and advice.”

In fact, BoerBoel has been supplying NitraLife with cabinets for its various types of nitrogen generator for many years. In addition to being a long-term supplier, however, the company has also in turn been a customer of NitraLife’s:

“BoerBoel has purchased two of our nitrogen generators, which supply assist gas to a 3 kW Trumpf CO2 laser, and a Durma 4 kW fibre laser.

In addition, they are evaluating the advantage of installing a powder coating system, which could require another nitrogen generator,” Sowry explains.

BoerBoel purchased the first NitraLife generator three years ago. A year after that, they bought a second one.

“The big issue we discovered with nitrogen in cylinders for industrial use – such as for fabrication - is that of availability. And then, of course, there is the cost. So, when Tom Sowry and Twayne Stewart introduced the NitraLife concept to us, it made good sense. We installed one NitraLife generator and it worked extremely well! We have never had any downtime and it has reduced our gas costs tremendously,” van der Merwe enthuses.

BoerBoel were also concerned about the possibility of gas runouts, something which it experienced with previously when using cylinder gas.

“In terms of cost, the cylinder bundles we purchased were quite expensive - and we also paid rent on those bundles as well. When we needed to get a second or third bundle, the costs escalated. Now - having our own on-site, on-demand nitrogen generation - makes a big difference!

“For busy fabricators such as BoerBoel, having the peace of mind of a reliable, on-site and cost-effective nitrogen supply is a very tangible business advantage,” Sowry comments.

“Compressed nitrogen as a laser cutting assist gas has the advantage of improving the quality of our cut components. So being able to manufacture our own gas is a major advantage and I would estimate that each of the NitraLife generators which we purchased has amortised itself within a year,” asserts Van der Merwe.

“It has been a pleasure dealing with NitraLife! They are really on top of their game when they visit us to service the machines which we bought from them. And, simply on a relationship level, Tom and Twayne are also very pleasant people to do business with,” he concludes.

***Ends***

***(738 words)***

## **NOTE TO EDITORS**

### **About NitraLife**

NitraLife was founded in 1996 as a local, pioneering supplier and manufacturer of nitrogen generation equipment. The company was the first internationally to use a membrane separation process to generate high-purity nitrogen for commercial tyre inflation.

With this innovative flagship product, NitraLife was also the first to actively promote the use of nitrogen inflation in heavy transportation and latterly passenger vehicle tyres; and subsequently also in large off-the-road (OTR) mine vehicle tyres.

In 2016, NitraLife diversified into supplying nitrogen generators to the industrial sector with the development of the NitraCut generator, a product, which today, is mainly used by the laser cutting and fabrication industries. In 2018, the company developed NitraSpray, for the supply of nitrogen for spray painting in many different sectors of industry.

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