LKS® High PV Seal
for the Oil and Gas Industries

Custom components that drive tomorrow’s technologies.
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The LKS® High PV Seal: Better Performance and Predictability

For over 25 years, Bal Seal Engineering has been helping oil and gas industry OEMs and tier suppliers solve their toughest upstream and downstream sealing challenges.

Our LKS® high PV seal continues this tradition by delivering reliable, consistent performance and offering unprecedented levels of service life and predictability in the most demanding rotary and reciprocating applications. The innovative, multi-component LKS seal offers exceptional protection against leakage in harsh media, temperatures, pressures and speeds, and it replaces costly sealing assemblies.

LKS® Technology

The LKS high PV seal consists of a graphite-filled PTFE sealing ring energized with a Bal Spring® canted coil spring. The seal is reinforced with a high-temperature engineered thermoplastic anti-extrusion element and a metal locking ring. Under high pressures and velocities, this combination of components guards against extrusion of the seal jacket material by supporting it in hardware with little or no clearance between the seal and rotating shaft. The LKS seal’s unique design forces the wear of the jacket material to occur at the lip contact area, not the hinge point. This ensures longer life and superior sealing performance.

LKS® high PV seal cross section

- PTFE sealing ring
  (GFP55 Graphite-fiber reinforced PTFE)
- Metal locking ring
  (Stainless steel)
- Bal Spring® canted coil spring
  (Corrosion-resistant Hastelloy®)
- PEEK anti-extrusion element
  (P69D High-temperature thermoplastic)
Understanding “PV”

PV is the product of media pressure (P) and the velocity (V), or surface speed, of the shaft. It is commonly expressed in PSI-feet/min. Surface speed is calculated by multiplying shaft rotational speed by the shaft circumference. The PV number is determined by multiplying the resulting surface speed number by the pressure.

Seal materials subjected to increasing PV conditions will eventually reach a thermal failure point known as the “PV limit.” The PV limit of a material indicates the highest combination of speed and pressure at which normal wear may be expected. Above this limit, an abrupt increase in seal wear rate will occur, and the seal surface may begin to melt.

Typical Constant PV Curve

Effecte sealing in high pressures and speeds is a balancing act. Designers should target a PV value of 250,000 or less in order to ensure optimal equipment service life.

The LKS seal’s unique geometry and material combination enable it to outlast other sealing solutions in high PV environments.
LKS® Seal Applications

Pump Systems
Pumps and pump systems rely on seals to protect costly bearings from damage and contamination. In these applications, the LKS® seal creates a barrier between the harsh mud, sand, oil, H₂S, water, and other contaminants that can impede or even prohibit the operation of the bearings, motor, and other critical components. The LKS seal also helps guard against adverse environmental impact by minimizing the possibility of external leakage.

Top Drives
Today’s more aggressive drilling and exploration practices place an added level of demand on top drives, the units that provide rotational force to the drill string. A typical top drive assembly houses a wash pipe that allows drilling mud from the shaker to travel down the center pipe. The LKS seal’s primary role in this application is to prevent the leakage of drilling mud from the top drive assembly.

Rotary Steerables
A rotary steerable system is programmed by the directional driller, who transmits commands using surface equipment. The tools interpret the commands, and gradually steer in the desired direction. Continuous rotation of the drill string allows for improved transportation of drilled cuttings to the surface. In this application, the LKS seal creates a barrier and keeps rock, oil, mud, and sand from entering the tool and damaging hardware.

LWD/MWD Pulsing Tools
Many oil and gas wells are drilled directionally, and techniques known as “logging while drilling” (LWD) and “measurement-while-drilling” (MWD) allow important information about the drilling process to be continuously transmitted to the surface. MWD logs use mud pulse technology to send data from the tools on the bottom of the drill string to topside processors. The LKS seal prevents fluid, mud, sand, rock and H₂S gas from entering the mud pulser casing, and it also helps keep moisture from migrating into the tool’s sensitive electronics.
LKS® Performance Data

Factors such as speed, pressure, and media play a major role in the performance of every rotary seal. To illustrate the performance difference between a standard rotary seal and the LKS® seal, we developed a side-by-side test to assess life expectancy in both lab and field environments.

In this test, our Bal Seal® spring-energized KS seal was selected to represent a current state-of-the-art rotary seal. The KS seal consists of a locking ring, filled PTFE seal lip, and a Bal Spring® energizer. The LKS seal is similar in construction to the KS seal, but it contains an additional element to aid in wear prevention and protect against extrusion under pressure.

The table below compares the performance of the KS Seal to that of the LKS seal. The parameters in the lab were 500 psi and 500 RPM, using water as the media. Under these conditions, the LKS exhibited a performance life increase of up to 4 to 1 over the KS seal. In actual field conditions where oil and sand were introduced, the LKS exhibited up to 9 times the performance of the KS seal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life Hours</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KS</td>
<td>LKS®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>10,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>9,000+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lab (500 psi, 500 RPM, water and no sand)  
Field (100 psi, 100 RPM, heavy oil, with sand)
Product Innovation Through Engineering Collaboration

At Bal Seal Engineering, we create custom sealing, connecting, conducting, and EMI/RFI shielding solutions that improve the performance and reliability of the equipment you design and manufacture. For over 60 years, we’ve helped some of the biggest names in worldwide industry gain a competitive edge. And in many cases, we’ve helped to develop breakthroughs and shape industry standards along the way. Our collaborative engineering approach enables us to forge “innovation partnerships” with engineers like you who want to make their products stronger, faster, lighter, and more functional.

In early development or existing product improvement stages, we combine our proven core products with application engineering, precision manufacturing and material science expertise to produce solutions that deliver.

More Solutions for Oil and Gas

Bal Seal® spring-energized seals
In addition to the LKS® high PV seal, we offer a complete line of Bal Seal® spring-energized seals for rotary, oscillating, reciprocating, and static/face service in upstream and downstream applications. All of our seals are custom-engineered to provide longer service life, more uptime, and increased profitability. Select seal materials are NORSOK and NACE compliant.
Commitment to Quality

Under our ISO 9001:2015 certified quality system, every step—from design to manufacturing, packaging and shipping—is closely monitored and controlled. This comprehensive Total Quality Management approach results in custom-engineered solutions that meet or exceed your most demanding quality requirements.
Important Information

CLEANING
Bal Seal Engineering products may require cleaning and/or sterilization before use, depending on the application.

TESTING
It is essential that the customer run evaluation tests to determine if the proposed, supplied, or purchased Bal Seal Engineering products are suitable for the intended purpose. Run tests under actual service conditions with an adequate safety factor.

Welded springs have an increased probability of breaking or failing at or near the weld. This probability is magnified if the spring is used in an application involving extension of the spring. In addition, temperature affects the properties of the spring (i.e., tensile strength, elongation, etc.) Failure of Bal Seal Engineering products can cause equipment failure, property damage, personal injury, or death. Equipment containing Bal Seal Engineering products must be designed to provide for any eventuality that may result from a partial or total failure of Bal Seal Engineering products.

Bal Seal Engineering products must be tested with a sufficient safety factor after installation and be subjected to a program of regular maintenance and inspection. The customer, through analysis and testing, is solely responsible for making the final selection of the products and for ensuring that all performance, safety, and other requirements of the application are met.

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PATENTS
The products described herein include those which are the subject of pending and issued patents, both foreign and domestic, including patent 8,328,202 (LE-173 Rev. F).

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We’re more than just a component maker. In early development or existing product improvement stages, we combine our proven seals, springs, and electrical contacts with engineering, material science, and precision manufacturing expertise to produce solutions that break down performance barriers.

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