

Solutions provider to expand hydraulic cylinder cover distribution



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Published: 27 Apr 12

Preventive maintenance solutions provider Nkwe Mining Services plans to start the local manufacture and distribution of the US-patented Seal Saver hydraulic cylinder protector in the next two years.

Nkwe sales and marketing director **Sam Rapetswa** tells *Engineering News* that the company was recently awarded the distribution rights for the custom-made Seal Saver for the African continent.

He adds that the company is keen to expand its distribution capacity.

At least 50 000 Seal Saver units have been sold worldwide, excluding Africa, and Nkwe Mining Services hopes to create an interest in the product in the African industrial and mining markets.

"We have identified and are currently negotiating with someone in Namibia who is interested in signing up as a joint distributor for the Namibian region. We are seeking joint distributors, as we want to minimise our impact in the market as a direct seller to the end-user; however, we want to support our distribution network from a centralised position.

"In the long run, we plan to locally manufacture and distribute the product," he reveals.

Nkwe director **Neo Rapetswa** says the company's vision is to undertake ownership of the product from an African perspective.

She adds that there is a need to skill people in the region and create sustainable jobs. Locally manufacturing the Seal Savers will ensure that jobs are created.

The Seal Savers are available in various heat- and chemical-resistant materials and extend the life of hydraulic cylinders by up to three times by protecting the hydraulic cylinder from dirt and corrosion and preventing scoring and seal damage.

The protective cover contracts or expands with the hydraulic cylinder and is available in ballistic nylon, Kevlar and silica materials.

The ballistic nylon material is made up of a synthetic nylon fabric that is resistant to abrasion and tearing, and is also made with a polyurethane backing, which waterproofs the product.

The ballistic nylon material, which is used in bulletproof vests, is layered with ultraviolet protection and does not age, which is essential for the harsh African weather conditions.

This type of Seal Saver is suitable for earth-moving equipment and milling machines and protects the hydraulic cylinder from moisture and dust.

"Customers have also enquired about using the Seal Savers on pneumatic equipment, owing to the high temperatures associated with these machines. The products can operate in temperatures of up to 1 600 °C," notes Sam Rapetswa.

The Kevlar Seal Saver is lightweight and resistant to some chemicals and solvents and is used in mining and chemical applications.

Silica Seal Savers, which are resistant to most chemicals, are made of red silicone rubber and their applications include pad fabrics, valve covers and damage control cloth. It is resistant to most chemicals. It is used in harbours and acid plants in coal applications as well as in high temperatures and where high levels of moisture are present.

The seals take less than ten minutes to fit and the cylinder does not have to be removed from the machine to do so.

Neo Rapetswa says the Seal Savers have lasted for between 8 and 15 years on machines.

She reveals that mining companies have expressed an interest in the products, adding that many construction companies are also in talks to buy the product.

The Seal Saver range also includes the Hose Saver, which is a cover for hydraulic and pneumatic hoses and extends the life of the equipment by protecting it against abrasive wear and dry rot.

The Hose Saver is available in ballistic nylon and Kevlar material and is adjustable to fit various hose sizes.

The products can be used on mixer trucks, wheel loaders, dozers, excavators, quarry trucks, hydraulic shovels, hydraulic hammers, servohydraulic linear positioners and tag axle cylinder.

