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Packing Smart

By Laura Quarantiello

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By Laura Quarantiello

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It's one of the most embarrassing things that can happen to you in a security line at the airport: a hand search of your luggage. Security officers may have seen something suspicious on the screening machine, or you may have been chosen for a random search; either way, your personal items are about to be removed from your luggage and displayed for everyone in the immediate vicinity to see. While there's really no way to avoid random luggage searches, there are ways to make your luggage less suspicious and easier for security to check.

- Use heavy-duty plastic bags to pack personal items such as shampoo, toothpaste and other personals. See-through Baggies help security check your packed items quicker without having to remove everything.
- Pack small items and plastic Baggies on top of clothes so they can be seen and evaluated quickly.
- Avoid packing radios, compact disc players, pagers, or laptop computers, especially in carry-on luggage. These often set off screening machines and may cause a hand search of luggage. If you bring electronics with you, keep them separate from your luggage until you pass through security, and be prepared to demonstrate that they work.

Packing Smart

- Pack all medications in their original bottles with prescription labels to help avoid security questions. You should have a letter from your doctor for any large amounts of medications that may raise suspicions.
- Liquids should be packed in their original bottles (preferably Plastic.) Security may not allow certain liquids aboard if they deem them suspicious.
- Don't pack sharp objects, such as scissors, knives, and nail files. Airline personnel will confiscate these.

If you are subjected to a hand search of your baggage, don't panic. Experienced security personnel know what they are looking for and usually make quick work of

searches. Don't expect them to carefully repack everything, however. If you have packed correctly and avoided over packing items, a hand search shouldn't disrupt things too much. And don't worry; you won't be the last passenger to have your personal items aired in public.

(end)

Laura Quarantiello is the author of "Air-Ways: The Insider's Guide to Air Travel" – your ticket to cheaper, smoother, fewer hassle flights. For more info please visit: <http://www.tiare.com/airways.htm>

Simple Sealing Solution for Pump Shafts

By Thomas Yoon

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In this issue, we will focus on a much simpler way of sealing a rotating shaft of a pump. It's by using gland packing. This method of sealing has been in use for a very long time, and is still being used today.

There are advantages and disadvantages in using them.

Perhaps the first and foremost reason for replacing them with mechanical seals is because of the fact that gland packing needs a small amount of leak for cooling purposes.

A person who installs a gland packing must ensure that the latter does not grip the shaft too tightly. A little dripping must be allowed for. Pumps that contain hazardous liquids should not use them at all.

Packing Smart

Pumps that contain gland packing will usually be constructed with a small well and piping at the gland to lead the leak water away from the pump so as to ensure that the water will not damage the bearings, housing or foundation. This can really mess up the pump area if there is a choke at the drain piping that prevents the leaked water from flowing away.

The pump gland nuts may need to be tightened every now and then due to slight loosening after some time of operation. This is because the nut cannot be tightened hard against the soft packing.

Because the packing gland rubs against the shaft, it will tend to wear down the shaft. For this reason, and especially for larger pumps using packing glands, there will usually be a shaft sleeve that can be slipped over the shaft. The wear down will then occur only on the shaft sleeve. This can be replaced instead of the more expensive shaft.

Another disadvantage of using packing glands is the fact that there is a certain amount of skill needed for cutting and installing the gland in order for it to work properly. It's more difficult to get consistent results.

Although there are disadvantages in using gland packing, there are also good reasons for using them.

They are less expensive to use compared to mechanical seals. If chosen and installed correctly, they can last for a very long time. When changing packing glands, the pump housing need not be opened up. This can be an advantage when skilled labor is in short supply.

Keeping stock of spares is not a problem because they can be used for all pump brands as long as they have the same gland sizes. Pump packing materials are more robust compared to the fragile and delicate mechanical seals.

For more information on gland packing and pump troubleshooting, download the free software from

Many years of working experience in Marine, Facilities, Construction has given the author material for writing e-books and articles related to engineering, and management.

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