

Venture's Technical Information: LAMP STARTING



Pulse start metal halide ballasts provide the proper combination of open circuit voltage and high voltage pulses to start the lamp. The pulse is provided by a specially designed ignitor, or starter, that is used in conjunction with the ballast. As soon as the ignitor senses that the lamp has started, it discontinues the pulsing operation. At this point, the ballast sustaining voltage must be sufficient to maintain lamp operation. A positive feature of this system is that the lamp will hot restart in 3-4 minutes following a power interruption. Traditional probe start metal halide ballasts can take as long as 10-15 minutes to restart the lamp.

The ballast open circuit voltage starts traditional probe start metal halide and mercury vapor lamps. Auxiliary electrodes, or probes, aid these lamps in starting. The probe electrode is disconnected after lamp has warmed up. Most of these lamps operate on CWA ballasts that offer a more "peaked" open circuit voltage, to assist lamp starting.

High Pressure Sodium lamps start in a manner similar to pulse start metal halide lamps. The main difference is a slightly less demanding ignitor pulse requirement.

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