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Department of Energy Official Touts Bush Administration's Efforts to Modernize our Nation's Electric Grid

Louisiana to increase energy efficiency with upgrades between the LaBarre and Metaire electric substations

NEW ORLEANS, LA – The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) newly confirmed Assistant Secretary for the Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability Kevin M. Kolevar today highlighted the Bush Administration's efforts to increase the use of new power delivery system equipment in New Orleans, as well as DOE's recent announcement to invest up to $51.8 million to modernize and secure our nation's electric grid. Mr. Kolevar visited the Entergy Louisiana Operations Center in Gretna, LA, a member of the Southwire Company's team, which DOE selected in June to receive up to $13.3 million to install a high-temperature superconducting cable to solve real-world electrical congestion near downtown New Orleans.

"As demand for electricity continues to grow, so too must our commitment to identify solutions and deploy new technologies that will help us realize President Bush's goal of a modern, reliable and affordable electricity system," Mr. Kolevar said. "New Orleans understands first hand the importance of a safe and reliable supply of energy, and the Department of Energy's work with Southwire and Entergy will help transform how this city transmits power."

The Southwire power deliverty project will install a 13.8-kilovolt superconducting cable to connect the existing LaBarre and Metaire substations, owned by Entergy Corporation of New Orleans, LA, a member of Southwire's project team. DOE's Oak Ridge National Laboratory and nkt cables of Germany are also members of the Southwire Company's team selected to receive funding from DOE.

This project will advance the development and application of high-temperature superconductors, which help to alleviate congestion by transmitting more electricity with greater energy efficiency. Superconductors - solid ceramic compounds that conduct electricity more efficiently than traditional copper wires - can be a key to improving the capacity, efficiency, and reliability of electric power equipment. A major challenge prior to commercialization is to develop superconductors that can operate at relatively "high" temperatures, from approximately -320 to -370 degrees Fahrenheit (50 to 77 Kelvin), and in magnetic fields from 1 to 4 Tesla.

The Southwire Company was among four other consortia selected by DOE to receive a total of up to $51.8 million for cost-shared projects that will help accelerate much-needed modernization of our Nation's electric grid. Other companies selected by DOE to receive funding are as follows: American Superconductor - (DOE cost share: $9 million); American Superconductor - (DOE cost share: $12.7 million); SC Power Systems - (DOE cost share: $11 million); and SuperPower Inc. - (DOE cost share: $5.8 million). For more information on all of these projects, visit: http://www.energy.gov/news/5180.htm.

The selected projects will help advance the future generation of power delivery equipment and aid the development of a highly efficient electricity grid system for the Nation. Two research projects selected will help increase reliability and efficiency of power delivery cables, and the remaining three projects will place an emphasis on fault current limiters. DOE's National Energy Technology Laboratory will manage these

projects, which are expected to last two to five years. Projects will be equally cost-shared between DOE and selected teams, totaling $103.6 million in DOE/team project cost. DOE funding is expected to be allocated in Fiscal Years (FY) 2007-2012, subject to appropriations from Congress, with $10 million from FY2007, and $7 million requested in FY2008.

DOE's Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability (OE) will oversee the research projects announced today. OE leads national efforts to modernize the electric grid; enhance the security and reliability of the energy infrastructure; and facilitate recovery from disruptions to the energy supply.

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