

SMUD News Release

Sacramento Municipal Utility District

• News Media Services

• 916•732•5111

For Immediate Release: May 6, 2009

SMUD honored for using environmentally friendly transformer oil

The Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) was recently recognized as the first utility in the country to commit to purchasing all new transformers with natural ester transformer oil.

Cooper Power Systems applauded SMUD's leadership in adopting the environmentally friendly oil. "SMUD's early adoption of the natural product puts SMUD in the forefront and shows that they understand the benefits of natural ester," said Henry Hecker, global product director of Cooper Power Systems.

Six years ago the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) moved to buy all new distribution transformers filled with a renewable, environmentally friendly, soy-based oil, replacing mineral oil-filled transformers that have been widely used by utilities for many decades. To date, this change has eliminated SMUD's use of petroleum-based fluid in approximately 20,000 transformers.

An ester-filled transformer has a smaller carbon footprint over its installed lifetime. The fluid is renewable, biodegradable and less flammable. It requires less energy to produce and extends the life of the transformer, therefore, extending the cycle for replacement. Prior to making this change, SMUD staff performed a business analysis that established a lifetime cost benefit of 20 percent for transformers filled with the new fluid.

"Moving to soy-based transformer oil is one of many green initiatives SMUD has embraced in-house," said Mike Rudek, SMUD's supervisor of Electrical Design Standards. "Our concern for the

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environment is embedded in our culture.”

As the nation’s sixth largest customer-owned utility, SMUD has been providing low-cost, reliable electricity for over 60 years to Sacramento County (and a small portion of Placer County). SMUD is a recognized leader and award winner for its innovative energy efficiency programs, renewable power technologies, and for its sustainable solutions for a healthier environment.

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