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New "Super Boiler" Technology Tested In Alabama Could Create Billions in Savings for U.S. Companies

U.S. Senator Jeff Sessions Joins U.S. Department of Energy, Developers to Discuss Energy Impact

BIRMINGHAM, Ala.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Results of the first field test of the new Super Boiler conducted in Birmingham indicate the new boiler technology could revolutionize the energy efficiency of industrial steam generation leading to billions of dollars in energy savings for U.S. companies.

The Super Boiler is the culmination of more than seven years of research and development by the U.S. Department of Energy, the Gas Technology Institute (Des Plaines, IL) and Cleaver-Brooks, Inc. (Milwaukee, WI). Alagasco joined the partnership, bringing the test site to a location in the utility's service area. The first U.S. test site for the ultra-high efficiency Super Boiler, is Specification Rubber Products Inc. based in Alabaster, Ala. The plant, a subsidiary of American Cast Iron Pipe Company, manufactures parts for the water works industry.

In July 2006, the Gas Technology Institute and Cleaver-Brooks installed a 300 horsepower high pressure steam Super Boiler which has been running 24 hours a day, five days a week with excellent results. After more than 6,000 hours of operation, fuel to steam efficiency has been consistently in the 93-94 percent range, and NO_x levels have been less than 9 ppm. Annual gas savings have averaged nearly 13 percent. In Alabama alone, replacing 2,000 boilers with this modernized equipment that is now available could save 7.2 Bcf of natural gas.

"One of the goals of this partnership was to develop technology for boiler users like Specification Rubber that would use energy efficiently while protecting the environment," said Alagasco President Dudley Reynolds. "Alagasco saw this project as an opportunity to help advance technology that could benefit our industrial customers here in Alabama."

The field test in Alabama is the first step towards transforming the energy efficiency of industrial steam generation. Additional field tests are planned at Clement Pappas & Co. (Ontario, CA) and Third Dimension Inc. (West Jordan, UT).

The U.S. Department of Energy has estimated that, by 2020, the Super Boiler technology could save more than 185 trillion BTU of energy. That amount is equivalent to the natural gas consumed by more than two million households.

"Steam generation accounts for about one-third of all the energy consumed in U.S. manufacturing," said Alexander Karsner, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

This morning, U.S. Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL) is joining with Department of Energy officials, developers of the Super Boiler technology and Alabama companies at Specification Rubber Products in Alabaster to discuss the benefits of Super Boiler technology and Alabama's involvement in improving industrial energy efficiency at home and across the U.S. The Senator will also tour the plant and get a first-hand look at the new Super Boiler.

"I applaud the efforts of executives at Specification Rubber Products who have worked hard to bring the new super boiler online at their Alabaster facility," Sessions said. "The super boiler will decrease the facility's demand for natural resources such as oil and natural gas. One of the critical steps that we must take to reduce our dependence on foreign fuel is to adopt advanced technologies that use energy more efficiently here at home. I am proud that yet another Alabama company has taken major steps toward that goal."

Specification Rubber Products is located at 1568 First Street North, Alabaster, Alabama.

Alagasco, an Energen subsidiary, is the largest natural gas utility in the state of Alabama serving 455,000 customers throughout central Alabama.

To view a video about Super Boiler technology, go to www.gastechology.org. Under Hot Topics, click on "Super Boiler: Think Globally, Act Locally" link.