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Duke Energy Generation Services Partners With Others On Nationwide Solar Efforts

Duke Energy Generation Services (DEGS) and two partners have announced plans to build and finance distributed solar projects across the United States.

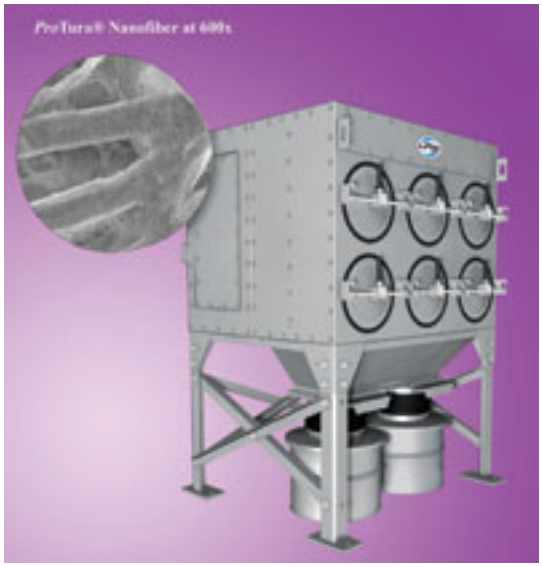
Based on the deal, DEGS (part of Duke Energy Corp.'s Commercial Businesses) and Integrys Energy Services (a subsidiary of Integrys Energy Group) will focus on jointly owning rooftop and smaller ground-mounted photovoltaic (PV) solar projects that deliver electricity to investment-grade commercial, government and utility customers under long-term power-purchase agreements. Smart Energy Capital, the third partner, will develop the projects and arrange financing.

While DEGS and Integrys will continue to independently develop commercial solar projects pursuant to their own corporate strategies, their new working relationship will serve as a way to cooperatively boost growth in an attractive segment of the solar market. The structure of the partnership is expected to help create an end-to-end approach for bringing solar projects to market. It also will let DEGS and Integrys monetize available federal tax benefits associated with the projects.

Terms of the agreement call for DEGS and Integrys to equally supply the necessary equity capital for construction and ownership of the distributed solar projects, and also be responsible for operating and maintaining them. The companies have said they intend to invest up to $180 million in total capital over the next two years. Individual project size is expected to be 500 kilowatts and up, depending on customer needs.

"What makes this partnership unique is its focus on distributed solar solutions that produce renewable electricity close to where it is used, rather than at centralized power plants," said Greg Wolf, DEGS senior vice president, in an industry release. He added that the companies involved bring a wealth of project devel-opment, construction, management and financing expertise to the table. Integrys, for example, has already invested more than $65 million in 20 different distributed generation solar projects across the United States with a combined capacity of more than
10 megawatts.

For its part, Smart Energy Capital is especially pleased with the agreement. As Rob Krugel, its managing partner noted, "We believe this partnership provides a solution to one of the fundamental challenges in the commercial segment of the solar market: reliability and certainty of financing."



Optimized Cartridge Dust Collector

United Air Specialists' SFC downflow cartridge dust collector produces savings with a patented filter-cleaning system that combines nanofiber filter cartridges and an optimized cabinet design to deliver high air-cleaning efficiency with low energy use. The system helps save energy with fewer pulses, which minimizes use of compressed air (and filter wear), while more efficient cleaning enables the system to operate at low static pressure over time.

United Air Specialists
A unit of Clarcor, Inc.
Cincinnati, OH

For more info, enter 30 at www.MT-freeinfo.com

Energy-Efficient Refrigeration Dryers

Kaeser's TF-series energy-saving refrigeration dryers ensure a cost-effective supply of quality, dry compressed air. With the addition of the 25 m^3/min TF 251, the line offers even greater energy efficiency. All models operate with a low pressure differential of less than 0.19 bar. This enables the maximum working pressure of the connected compressor to be reduced, in turn lowering energy demand. The company notes that some models use up to 40% less energy than previous TF-series units.

Kaeser Compressors, Inc.
Fredericksburg, VA

For more info, enter 31 at www.MT-freeinfo.com

Without Training Aid, Green-Skilled Worker Shortage To Worsen

A recent Association of Energy Engineers survey of 1500 energy professionals points to a significant shortage of green-skilled workers in industry that may worsen without new training initiatives. According to the research, 67% of respondents point to a shortage of energy-management practitioners. Of all respondents, 37% say they plan to retire in the next 10 years. To address current and possible future green-industry worker deficiencies, 60% say that national and state training for green jobs is needed.

Association of Energy Engineers
Atlanta, GA

For more info, enter 32 at www.MT-freeinfo.com

Eco-Friendly Pump Priming

According to Thompson Pump, its new pumps with OVT (oil-less vacuum technology) priming offer a number of improvements over those with traditional vacuum priming. While both allow for a basic pump to prime automatically, the company says the OVT does it more efficiently with lower maintenance and higher air-handling. Among their many features are non-contacting rotors that eliminate internal wear, leading to increased reliability and service life. Dry-running and air-cooled, these units require no recirculating oil, have no water levels to check and no cooling systems to maintain. Removing the oil from the priming system eliminates sources of smoke, mist or pollution that can be associated with traditional systems.

Thompson Pump
Port Orange, FL

For more info, enter 33 at www.MT-freeinfo.com