Sikorsky Brings Environmentally Friendly Cogeneration Plant On Line In Stratford

STRATFORD, Connecticut -

Sikorsky Aircraft Corp. today commissioned a combined heat and power cogeneration facility that produces enough power to supply 84 percent of the company's 2-million-square-foot Stratford, Conn., facility's needs. That output equates to the annual energy use of approximately 1,100 area homes. Sikorsky is a subsidiary of United Technologies Corp. (NYSE: UTX).

The new system also will provide 85 percent of the facility's steam heating needs while reducing greenhouse gas emissions by more than 8,900 metric tons annually – the equivalent of greenhouse gas emissions produced by 1,600 passenger vehicles a year.

Sikorsky dedicated and powered up the facility Friday, culminating a design and construction project that began 3 1/2 years ago with a $26 million capital investment by the company and a $4.66 million State Cogeneration Incentive grant. Dignitaries attending the event included State Senator Kevin Kelly, State Representatives Larry Miller and Laura Hoydick, and Deputy Commissioner Macky McCleary of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP).

"Today Sikorsky takes another big step in our commitment to operate as an environmentally friendly and sustainable business. This is a journey we've been on for many years now," said Sikorsky President Jeffrey P. Pino. "In 2000, we were the first in the aerospace industry to introduce environmentally friendly aircraft paint that contains zero-to-low Volatile Organic Compounds. In the factory we have introduced numerous safety and process improvements that better protect both our workers and our environment, and we continually look to make further improvements."

He also noted, "In 2010, we installed 450 solar panels on our Engineering Building rooftop that together generate 106,250 kilowatt hours of clean renewable energy annually. To date, these panels have generated 154,212 kilowatt hours, the equivalent of powering 164 houses while eliminating 204,039 pounds of CO2 emissions."

DEEP Deputy Commissioner McCleary said, "The Sikorsky name has been synonymous with innovation since the 1930s, and today the company is a leader in environmental protection. The scope, scale and vision required to execute a project like this is what we need in Connecticut and throughout the United States right now. Government and business are in this together. We have to help each other."

Fellow United Technologies company Carrier and its NORESCO business served as strategic partners on the project, providing design and construction consultation. Neil Petchers, President and CEO of NORESCO, said, "This cogeneration project is a prime example of how industrial and commercial businesses can improve energy efficiency, move toward energy independence and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, all while meeting traditional financial and economic benchmarks." NORESCO specializes in the development, design, construction, financing and operation of energy and environmental efficiency projects.

Sikorsky dedicated the new facility to employee Walter Joseph, who worked for the company for 32 years after serving in the U.S. Navy. Joseph ran the powerhouse operations for Sikorsky and was instrumental in the planning and construction of the cogeneration facility. Sadly, he passed away on March 15, 2011, succumbing to leukemia after a five-year battle in which he continually stayed in touch with the project and his colleagues even when hospitalized. His wife Geraldine participated in the ceremony and unveiled a plaque dedicated to his memory.

Sikorsky Aircraft Corp., based in Stratford, Conn., is a world leader in helicopter design, manufacture and service. Headquartered in Farmington, Conn., Carrier is the world's leader in high technology heating, air-conditioning and refrigeration solutions. United Technologies Corp., of Hartford, Conn., provides a broad range of high-technology products and support services to the aerospace and building systems industries.