NEWS RELEASE NEWS RELEASE

INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT ENERGY ASSOCIATION

125 Turnpike Road, Suite 4
Westborough, MA 01581-2841
Phone (508) 366-9339
Fax (508) 366-0019
idea@districtenergy.org
www.districtenergy.org

University of Cincinnati Honored by International District Energy Association

Utilities division earns association's system-of-the-year award

BOSTON – July 18, 2005 – The International District Energy Association (IDEA) presented its System-of-the-Year Award to the University of Cincinnati (UC) at ceremonies June 28 during the association's 96th Annual Conference & Trade Show in St. Paul, Minn.

Given annually, the System-of-the-Year Award is the top honor IDEA can confer on a public or privately owned district energy system. It recognizes exemplary system performance and service furthering the goals of the district energy industry.

The University of Cincinnati was selected by a panel of IDEA-member judges based, in part, on the Utilities and Technical Support division's impressive record of campus energy infrastructure improvements over the past 10 years that have resulted in a 50 percent increase in customer load, a 40 percent reduction in energy use and total accrued savings of $44 million in energy costs. The energy usage per square foot continues to drop even though the campus continues to grow.

"On behalf of all University of Cincinnati utility employees, I express our pride in winning this award," said Joe Harrell, associate director of UC Utilities and Technical Support. "We have worked hard to improve our district energy system efficiency and reliability, and it is gratifying to have that acknowledged by others in our industry."

The UC's two production plants currently provide steam used primarily for heating, chilled water for cooling, and electricity to 100 buildings totaling 12 million sq ft, including the entire university campus and six hospitals. These customers, who could purchase their energy from other suppliers, choose to connect to the UC district energy system because of its reliability and cost-effectiveness.

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The university's most recent infrastructure upgrade included construction of a new $84 million Central Utility Plant housing a 47 MW cogeneration system, which started operation in May 2004; two boilers; and 18,400 tons of new chiller capacity. The new facility is connected by system's East Utility Plant containing an additional 13,400 tons of chiller capacity, four boilers and a 2.8 million-gallon thermal energy storage system. The two plants are integrated and controlled with software that enables operators to most efficiently operate the system based on load, commodity prices, equipment availability and weather.

The cogeneration operation produces most of the system's electricity during peak hours when the local utility company has higher prices; the plant buys twice as much power from them during off-peak hours when the price is much lower. The system has two combustion turbines with waste-heat boilers that recover heat leaving the turbines to make steam, further increasing plant efficiency. Nearly 90 percent of the UC's input energy is converted to usable steam and electricity. Nitrogen oxide emissions from the new plant are running just half of permitted levels.

The UC also has earned other recent honors. It was named 2005 National Project of the Year by the Association of Energy Engineers and received Ohio's 2003 Governor's Award for Excellence.

Past winners of IDEA's System-of-the-Year Award include the University of Missouri-Columbia; Seattle Steam Co; Cornell University; Consolidated Edison of New York's Steam Business Unit; Enwave Energy Corp., Toronto; Trigen Energy Baltimore; the University of California, Los Angeles; NRG Energy Center Minneapolis; District Energy St. Paul; and Energy Systems Co., Omaha, Neb.

District energy is an efficient, environmentally responsible method of heating and cooling buildings. District energy systems product steam, hot water or chilled water at a central plant. The steam or water is then piped underground to individual buildings within a designated area for heating, cooling or use in industrial processes.

With headquarters in Boston, Mass., the 800-member IDEA comprises district heating and cooling executives, managers, engineers, consultants and equipment suppliers from 12 countries. Its core mission is to support the growth and utilization of district energy as a means to conserve fuel and increase energy efficiency to improve the global environment. For more on IDEA, go to www.districtenergy.org.

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For more information, contact:

Everett Wolverton Assistant VP & Director Utilities (513)-556-4828, CELL (513)-470-2134, everett.wolverton@uc.edu

Joe Harrell, Associate Director, Utilities and Technical Support, University of Cincinnati, (513) 556-4828, harreljh@uc.edu

Rob Thornton, President, International District Energy Association, (508) 366-9339, rob.idea@districtenergy.org

Monica Westerlund, Westerlund Communications, (952) 935-4904, mlw@westerlund.com