Asia Energized


Meffert notes that the common theme for both conferences points to the world’s growing interest in energy management systems (EMS). “China has completed a draft standard and Korea is in the midst of writing one,” he says, adding that future work for his group in Tech’s Enterprise Innovation Institute may involve helping China develop its EMS and guidance documents.

“Most of the speakers at these conferences were also at the UN Industrial Development Organization Conference in Vienna in March,” he says, “and will probably collaborate on an ISO International Energy Management System.”

Industry Helps a County Clean Up Its Act

In 2004, Bartow County launched a county-wide environmental management system to improve air and water quality, undertake land preservation and restoration, achieve regulatory compliance, and build environmental stewardship for a partnership including all aspects of the community. Among reported results were a 25 percent reduction in air emissions and a 30 percent cut in water usage. As reported in Focus on Manufacturing a year ago, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency hailed the effort as “a model for cooperative conservation in the nation and the wave of environmental protection for the future.”

A key word here is “cooperative,” for the Bartow endeavor, assisted by Georgia Tech’s Enterprise Innovation Institute, has not only involved city and county government entities but also agriculture and industry. An example of the latter is Georgia Power Company’s Plant Bowen, which is contributing to the area’s air quality by reducing nitrous oxide (NOx) emissions. By maximizing selective catalytic reduction performance and optimizing boiler efficiencies, the power plant in 2006 reached its ozone season NOx target of 85 percent.
Another goal for Plant Bowen was to cut landfill-bound solid waste. Through reuse, recycling, and sale of materials and coal combustion by-products, it realized a 2006 cost savings of $3.6 million.

**Aid for Import Woes**

American manufacturers can point to numerous advantages their foreign competitors enjoy—government-paid participation in international trade shows, government-supplied R&D funding, tariff concessions, export waivers, lower-cost health insurance, relatively few environmental and safety regs, limited litigation, and the list goes on. Domestic industries enter economic competition comparatively light.

But there is federal support for firms that can demonstrate declines in sales and employment due to lower-priced imports—the Trade Adjustment Assistance program. The U.S. Department of Commerce funds 11 centers across the country that assist regional manufacturers with determining strengths and weaknesses and finding ways to improve operations from accounting to production to shipping. Qualified companies can receive up to 50 percent federal cost-share to implement identified improvements.

For companies in Georgia, that help is available from the Southeastern Trade Adjustment Assistance Center headquartered at Georgia Tech in Atlanta. To learn more, contact Marla Gorges at 404/894-6787 (marla.gorges@innovate.gatech.edu) or Tracy Cole at 404/385-4222 (tracy.cole@innovate.gatech.edu).

**Welcome Aboard**

The Enterprise Innovation Institute has a new staffer working out of the Dublin office. Robert Wray specializes in helping central-Georgia firms with new product identification/development, project planning/management, and existing product/process improvement. He has extensive experience in market analysis, product design, testing, production implementation, project management, and productivity. Prior to joining Georgia Tech, he was a chief engineer at Husqvarna, a leading producer of lawn and garden equipment.