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National Grid commissions green alternative to sulphur hexafluoride

National Grid has commissioned a green alternative to sulphur hexafluoride as an insulating gas in the substation switchgear at its Sellindge site

31 May 2017

National Grid, working with GE Grid Solutions and 3M, has commissioned the world's first gas-insulated switchgear using an alternative to sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆). Used around the world for decades, SF₆ is a powerful insulation gas that allows high voltage electricity switchgear to take up less space. However, while leakage rates are extremely low, SF₆ is also a potent greenhouse gas, 23,900 times worse for the environment than CO₂.

National Grid has commissioned the new green alternative at the Sellindge 400,000 volt substation in Kent. The project uses 3M and GE Grid Solutions' green gas for grid – or g³ – instead of SF₆. This reduces the Global Warming Potential of the gas used in our equipment by 98%.

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Notes for editors

Notes to Editors:

National Grid is pivotal to the energy systems in the UK and the north eastern United States. We aim to serve customers well and efficiently, supporting the communities in which we operate and making possible the energy systems of the future.

National Grid in the UK:

- We own and operate the electricity transmission network in England and Wales, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. We also operate, but do not own, the Scottish networks. Our networks comprise approximately 7,200 kilometres (4,474 miles) of overhead line, 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) of underground cable and 342 substations.
- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.
- As Great Britain's System Operator (SO) we make sure gas and electricity is transported safely and efficiently from where it is produced to where it is consumed. From April 2019, Electricity System Operator (ESO) is a new standalone business within National Grid, legally separate from all other parts of the National Grid Group. This will provide the right environment to deliver a balanced and impartial ESO that can realise real benefits for consumers as we transition to a more decentralised, decarbonised electricity system.
- Other UK activities mainly relate to businesses operating in competitive markets outside of our core regulated businesses; including interconnectors, gas metering activities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) importation terminal – all of which are now part of National Grid Ventures. National Grid Property is responsible for the management, clean-up and disposal of surplus sites in the UK. Most of these are former gas works.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at <https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news>

National Grid undertakes no obligation to update any of the information contained in this release, which speaks only as at the date of this release, unless required by law or regulation.

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