

ABB electric drives save a record 310 million megawatt hours in 2011

Energy savings equivalent to the output of 31 nuclear power station blocks

Zurich, Switzerland, June 11, 2012 – ABB, the leading power and automation technology group, has released its annual estimate of the savings achieved by its installed base of drives. About 310 million megawatt-hours (MWh) of electric power was saved by ABB drives in 2011, an increase of 19 percent compared with the previous year. Electric drives are used to regulate the speed and power consumption of electric motors. Industrial electric motors account for about 25 percent of all the electricity consumed worldwide.

The savings from ABB drives in 2011 correspond to 260 million tons of CO₂ emissions – had this power been generated by fossil fuels – or electricity costs savings of approximately \$34 billion for customersⁱ. These savings are equivalent to the electricity generated by more than 30 nuclear power station blocks, or to the annual power consumption of 75 million EU householdsⁱⁱ.

“The future potential for energy and cost savings is enormous since only about 10 percent of industrial motors are combined currently with electric drives,” said Ulrich Spiesshofer, member of the Group Executive committee and head of ABB’s Discrete Automation and Motion division. “Using energy more efficiently will remain, for a significant time, the biggest opportunity available to cut energy consumption as well as costs and emissions.”

Electric motors are used widely in industry, for example, when pumping water, running fans and air conditioning, conveying goods over belts, rolling steel, moving elevators, etc.

ABB’s annual savings estimate is based on a comparison of the average electricity consumption in applications with and without drives. Many electric motors that are not equipped with drive technology run at maximum speed and are simply throttled if less performance is needed.

Energy accounts for 92 to 95 percent of the life cycle cost of a motor, depending on its size, so an investment in electric drives typically pays back in less than two years.

Additional material including an illustration and infograph as well as pictures are available at www.abb.com/news and www.facebook.com/aroundabb.

ABB (www.abb.com) is a leader in power and automation technologies that enable utility and industry customers to improve their performance while lowering environmental impact. The ABB Group of companies operates in around 100 countries and employs about 145,000 people.

For help with any technical terms in this release, please go to: www.abb.com/glossary

ⁱ At 2011 US electricity prices

ⁱⁱ Average of EU households electricity consumption, source: IEA world energy outlook 2011

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