



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Contact: Jane Burks, 601.960.7383

## **Stuart C. Irby Co. Acquires CW Utilities**

*Stuart C. Irby Co. acquisition positions the company for growth in the Houston, Texas utility distribution marketplace.*

Jackson, MS (September 21, 2006) - - Stuart C. Irby Co., a subsidiary of Sonepar USA, today signed an agreement today to acquire CW Utilities. (d.b.a. CWU) effective September 29, 2006.

CWU is a major provider of logistics and procurement services to Centerpoint Energy and the south Texas public power market and has developed a unique expertise in creating and managing high value-added alliance contracts.

Michael C. Wigton, President of Irby, says, "CWU has an excellent reputation for helping their customers improve service levels while reducing the costs associated with managing their inventory and logistics structures. Their focus on the total customer relationship is in complete agreement with our philosophy of business. We welcome the employees of CWU into Irby and look forward to working with them to expand our participation in the south Texas utility marketplace."

"CWU is very excited about joining the Irby/Sonepar family. It is a great opportunity for our organization and employees to become part of a growth oriented company with a strong commitment to serving our utility customers." says John Samperi, President of CWU. Through

this acquisition Irby will add one new location in Houston, Texas to its utility footprint. Terms of the agreement will not be disclosed.

Tony Burr, President of Sonepar USA, adds, “One year ago the acquisition of Irby provided us the opportunity to diversify our business base by participating in the electric utility market. This is a very important part of our business strategy as evidenced by the additional utility acquisitions in the past twelve months of Priester Supply, RE Supply and now CWU. Through Irby we will continue to invest in this highly attractive market segment.”

Irby holds a strong position as one of the top electrical distributors in the southeastern United States serving utility, commercial, contractor and industrial customers with innovative products and services.

Sonepar is a privately owned independent group with headquarters located in Paris (France). With operations in 29 countries across four continents, the group’s 21,100 employees and 1,242 branches generate annual sales over \$9.3 billion (7.8 billion Euros).

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SONEPAR USA, Communication

Contact Francois Chatin, 610-240-4950  
Penn Mutual Building  
510 Walnut Street, Suite 400  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

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Stuart C. Irby Company was founded in 1926 and is based in Jackson, Mississippi with more than 700 employees in 48 locations in thirteen states (Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas). To find out more, go to [www.irby.com](http://www.irby.com) or [www.sonepar-usa.com](http://www.sonepar-usa.com).

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