



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stuart C. Irby Co. Shines Bright for Gulf Coast Utilities

*Electrical Distributor worked around the clock to restore power to communities
devastated by harsh hurricane season*

JACKSON, Miss., November 12, 2008 – This past summer, when two destructive hurricanes worked their way through the center of the country, one electrical distributor used its past experience and time-tested tactics to plan and organize recovery efforts and restore power to hundreds of communities.

Stuart C. Irby Co., a subsidiary of Sonepar USA, has a network of branches across the United States, and was quick to respond when two hurricanes struck land within 14 days of each other last September.

On September 2, 2008 Hurricane Gustav hit land near Baton Rouge, LA. The storm brought heavy rains and winds in excess of 115 mph. When the power went out, Stuart C. Irby Co. was one of the first responders. With a disaster recovery plan already in place, Irby's Baton Rouge facility had a supply kit on hand, complete with a generator in the event the branch lost power. The kit also included portable lighting, ice chests, water coolers and other essentials to support recovery efforts.

"We have had a disaster recovery plan for years," said Don Corley, Vice President of Purchasing and Inventory at Irby. "After Hurricane Katrina, it was updated and enhanced to cover all of our critical business functions during an emergency event."

As damage and power outages from Hurricane Gustav spread, Irby employees went to work supplying customers with all the material they needed to restore power to ravaged communities.

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“We experienced widespread power outages throughout our system due to Hurricane Gustav,” said Ron May, Vice President , Engineering and Operations with Dixie Electric Membership Corporation (DEMCO). “Irby went above and beyond the call of duty as they worked tirelessly around the clock, ordering, receiving and delivering material to all of our warehouses and staging areas.”

When Hurricane Ike hit land just two weeks later, it was on record as one of the biggest storms to hit the Gulf Coast of Texas in almost a century. Irby was again posed with a difficult task. Although its Houston branch was spared from any serious damage, the surrounding area was in need of immediate tactical response.

“There were several large utilities in the Houston area that needed help restoring power to their customers,” said Don Corley. “Irby had over 100 people involved in the recovery effort over a three week period.”

Volunteers came to the Houston branch from Irby locations all over the country. Several groups cycled through Houston, working 16-18 hours a day, 5-7 days per week. Irby maintained a 24-hour, 7 days per week operation for several weeks in order to service local Houston utilities as they worked to restore power to the surrounding areas.

“Stuart C. Irby has earned every accolade that we could bestow on them,” said Alan Currie, Lead Sourcing Specialist at CenterPoint Energy. “Irby provided the local Houston branch a multitude of personnel and equipment to provide around the clock deliveries during Hurricane Ike restoration. In addition, they supplemented logistics personnel support at our main CNP distribution warehouses as well as the multitude of staging sites. Purchasing and Logistics would not have been as successful in the restoration effort without the resources Irby provided.”

With over 800 employees nationwide, Stuart C. Irby Co. was able to deploy over 20% of its work force to help with the recovery efforts in Houston and Baton Rouge.

“Our company came together not only to support the Utilities in these devastated areas of the country, but also for our employees and our customers,” said Mike Wigton, President of Stuart C. Irby Co. It is an example of the amazing teamwork and positive team spirit that exists at Irby.”

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About Stuart C. Irby Co.

Stuart C. Irby Company was founded in 1926 and is based in Jackson, Mississippi with 875 employees in 58 locations in 21 states (Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, South Dakota, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas). To find out more, go to www.irby.com or www.sonepar-usa.com.

About Sonepar USA

Sonepar USA is made up of the finest electrical supply distributors in the United States. The company has over 4,600 associates in 12 companies operating 253 branches in 35 states. In 2007, Sonepar USA achieved \$3 billion in revenue. It is a member of the Sonepar group - the world's largest privately held electrical distributor. Worldwide, Sonepar employs over 34,000 employees, with 1,450 branch locations and 2007 annual sales of \$15.3 billion.

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