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THE DES REPORT

A Publication of Metro Nashville District Energy System | **Spring Edition 2010**

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GM's Corner by Tim Hestle

April 22, 2010, marked the 40th anniversary of Earth Day. You may be thinking, "What is Earth Day? What is its purpose? How did it start?"

Earth Day evolved over a seven-year period beginning in 1962. Its founder, a U.S. senator from Wisconsin, Gaylord Nelson, was troubled over the deteriorating state of our environment. In the fall of 1963, he persuaded President Kennedy to make a five-day, 11-state, speaking tour in an attempt to bring environmental issues into the political limelight. For a variety of reasons, the tour did not achieve the success anticipated. For the next six years, Nelson continued to speak on environmental issues to a variety of audiences around the country. It appeared that the people were concerned but the politicians were not.

In 1969, anti-Vietnam War demonstrations, called "teach-ins," were popular and taking place at colleges and universities across the country. This gave Senator Nelson an idea. If he could organize a protest about what was happening to the environment, he could capture the support of the general public, incorporate student anti-war energy and force this issue onto the political agenda.

In September 1969, Nelson announced his plan for a nationwide grassroots demonstration, on behalf of the environment, at a conference in Seattle. His "environmental teach-in" was scheduled to take place in the spring of 1970, and everyone was invited to participate. The response was phenomenal. The wire services carried the story from coast to coast. The American people finally had a forum to express their concerns about what was happening to their land, rivers, lakes and air.

On April 22, 1970, approximately 20,000 demonstrators, thousands of schools and thousands of local communities participated in the first Earth Day. Nelson said the remarkable thing about the first Earth Day was the enormous, spontaneous response and that the event practically organized itself. The major objective of this demonstration was to force environmental issues into the political landscape. It worked. Beginning that same year, extensive federal laws regarding environmental policy were enacted. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was created and the Clean Air Act was passed in 1970. The Clean Water Act was passed in 1972, and the Endangered Species Act was passed in 1973.

In 1995, on the 25th anniversary of Earth Day, President Clinton awarded Gaylord Nelson the Presidential Medal of Freedom. This is the highest honor given to a civilian in the United States. During the ceremony, Clinton stated, "As the father of Earth Day, Gaylord Nelson inspired us to remember that the stewardship of our natural resources is the stewardship of

the American Dream."

OK, now that you know what Earth Day is and how it came about, you may be wondering, "What does that have to do with district energy in Nashville?"

As operator of the Nashville District Energy System, Constellation Energy's Projects and Services Group cares about protecting the environment. In fact, environmental stewardship is one of the core values for all of our employees. Personnel at the Nashville energy generation facility continually look for ways to reduce the plant's carbon footprint. Operational efficiencies are routinely monitored. Pallets, paper products, aluminum cans and construction waste (primarily fluorescent lightbulbs) are disposed of and recycled responsibly.

On a corporate level, environmental and climate challenges present opportunities for our company on a daily basis. Constellation Energy is constantly in pursuit of projects that will improve energy efficiency and provide clean, renewable energy sources, such as nuclear, wind and solar power, and create green jobs.

I urge everyone to do his or her part in protecting the environment.



How did the flood affect the Metro Nashville District Energy System?

On Saturday, May 1, 2010, most everyone in the middle Tennessee area was watching local television coverage of the severe thunderstorm warnings, tornado watches and flood watches. The storms continued throughout the night and all the next day without letting up. Record rainfall was recorded in the Nashville area on both Saturday and Sunday, with more than 6 inches both days. Creeks and rivers flooded neighborhoods, roads and the interstates surrounding Nashville. This made it nearly impossible to navigate to and around the city.

On Sunday afternoon, as the flood waters started spilling over the banks of the Cumberland River in downtown Nashville, DES' steam system was shut down to avoid potential safety issues, such as water hammers.

Sunday night, water spilled onto [First Avenue](#), filling the energy distribution tunnels on Broadway.

By Monday night, the river finally crested. Water reached as far as the [Country Music Hall of Fame](#) on Fourth Avenue.

During this time, the [Energy Generation Facility](#) was never in jeopardy of being flooded, as the chilled water system continued to supply cooling to the DES customers.

When the water receded and the operators of the DES were allowed access to the area, approximately 800,000 gallons of water were pumped out of the tunnels over the next two and a half days. After all structures, piping, insulation and electrical components were inspected, boilers were lit at the Energy Generation Facility to restore steam service to the DES customers. Condensate in the steam lines had to be evacuated slowly, and the wet insulation had to be dried as the system came up to operating pressure. At approximately 7 p.m. on Saturday, May 8, the steam system was back to normal.

The following statement was issued by the Metro DES liaison: "We greatly appreciate the outstanding work of CEPS (Constellation Energy Projects & Services Group) in working to restore service to district energy system customers in very difficult conditions. A job 'very well done' is extended to the staff and crew for their dedicated efforts."



Michael Bradley Retires

Michael Bradley has served as the Metro liaison to the Nashville District Energy System for the past six years. After more than 40 years of service in state and local government, Bradley made the decision to retire from Metro Government effective March 31, 2010.

He was recently honored for his dedication to Nashville and its citizens. In a certificate of recognition, Mayor Karl Dean cited Bradley's contributions to the economic development of the downtown district through his work as liaison for the Metro Nashville District Energy System.

Bradley's past government experience includes work with the Metro Department of Children's Services, Metro Finance and Real Property Services, Tennessee Department of Mental Health, and the Tennessee Board of Probation and Parole, where he served as executive director.

Bradley plans to use his experience to continue his career in the nonprofit sector. He has been a valuable asset to district energy in Nashville, and we wish him well in his future endeavors.

Thompson Brings Engineering Background, Customer Perspective to Advisory Board

As a member of the Metro Nashville District Energy System Advisory Board, Tom Thompson has been able to offer an engineer's and customer's perspective to the committee that monitors DES' operations. Thompson has served on the Metro Nashville District Energy System Advisory Board since 2007, and was elected vice chairman in 2008. He has been the director of engineering for the Renaissance Nashville Hotel for four years, but his experience in the industry spans almost three decades, as he's been with Marriott for 29 years. His experience in engineering, coupled with the fact that he's a DES customer, has made him an asset for the MNDES Advisory Board.



"The advisory board is focused on observing system operations and customer service related to the DES plant," Thompson said. "Simply put, we're here for checks and balances. Being an engineer probably allowed me to gain an understanding of the operations aspect pretty quickly, and because the Renaissance is on the system, I've been able to get a customer's perspective as well."

As an advisory board member, Thompson is able to represent other customers on the DES system by reporting any issues at the quarterly meetings; but he also makes himself available to answer any questions customers might have throughout the year.

"Part of my responsibilities includes being able to educate DES customers about the system," he said. "I'm always available to talk to customers about any issues they might have, and answer any questions about DES."

As the director of engineering for the Renaissance Nashville Hotel, Thompson is in charge of overseeing all of the operations in the building, including repairs, upgrades and preventive maintenance to equipment. Because the hotel is a 24/7 operation, Thompson's team is constantly keeping an eye on all the equipment in the hotel.

"Preventive maintenance is very important in my line of work, and I really want the DES customers to understand the importance of it as well," Thompson said. "Over the past few years we've seen a big push to make everything as 'green' as possible. One of the best ways for customers to save money and be more efficient is to perform regular preventive maintenance on their equipment."



Customer Spotlight: Renaissance Nashville Hotel

In the last newsletter, our Customer Spotlight focused on the Renaissance Nashville Hotel Office Tower – home to several Nashville businesses, including law firms, public relations firms, job placement agencies and publishing companies.

While many Nashvillians – even those who frequent the hotel – are unfamiliar with the office tower, comprising the top six floors of the Renaissance Nashville Hotel, the hotel itself has been a prominent Nashville landmark for almost 25 years.

At 385 feet tall, with 25 floors, the Renaissance Hotel has been the Nashville Convention Center's anchor hotel since both were completed in 1986. The hotel offers 649 rooms, 24 suites, 25 meeting rooms and more than 31,000 square feet of total meeting space. The hotel is frequently used by visiting professional sports teams, plays hosts to many high-profile functions for various conventions, and features the Bridge Bar – a unique lounge that crosses over Commerce Street, and offers interesting views of downtown. In 2009, a \$10 million renovation was completed on the interior of the hotel.

Since 1993, the Renaissance Hotel has been managed by John Fleming. As general manager, Fleming is responsible for overseeing the hotel's operations, sales and marketing, guest relations, emergency preparedness, and everything in between. Recently, we sat down with Fleming to discuss the hotel and tourism industry.

Q: How did you get started in hotel management?

A: I actually graduated with a psychology degree in 1974. I needed a job, and the job market was kind of bleak at that time, so I took a night audit job with a hotel owned by the Stouffer Corporation in Valley Forge, Pa. Stouffer was eventually bought out by Marriott, and because I was grandfathered in, I've technically been a Marriott employee for almost 37 years now.



Q: You've been at the Renaissance Nashville Hotel for 17 years. What's been the biggest change in your job since starting in 1993? What's been the biggest change at the hotel in general?

A: Technology has probably been the biggest change in the industry since I started here. We had computers in 1993, but didn't have the World Wide Web or e-mail. Fax machines were still popular, and we weren't using plastic key cards for guest rooms. Technology has made us more efficient and made it easier for guests to make reservations and plan vacations. As far as my job, nothing has really changed. My role is the same as it's always been. I'm responsible for the overall success of the hotel, and I still have to answer to owners, guests and my associates.

Q: What's the most challenging part of your job? What's the most rewarding part?

A: The most challenging aspect is balancing the economic roller coaster. When the economy is strong, our rates and occupancy levels are ideal. When the economy is sluggish, we have to change gears and become more focused on volume. My number one concern in a bad economy is making sure my employees have work. The most rewarding part of my job is the people I work with. I'm part of a great team, and many of us have worked here for a long time.

Q: Has the hotel been on DES' system since you've been the general manager?

A: Yes, the hotel has been on the system since it was completed in 1986. Of course, it was NTTC providing heating and cooling back then.

Q: As a GM of a large hotel, you've probably seen many other hotels in your career. Do you know how efficient the Renaissance's heating and cooling is compared to hotels that aren't on a district energy system?

A: I've worked at 11 different hotels in 10 different cities, and two of those were on a system like DES. I'm not sure if the hotels on district energy systems are more efficient on a day-to-day basis, but they're definitely more cost-effective and convenient on a yearly basis. Using DES eliminates our capital costs, and we don't have to oversee in-house heating and cooling equipment. DES' services make things very easy from an operational aspect.

Q: What's the overall reaction to the \$10 million makeover that was completed last year? Who selected the carpet colors?

A: The renovations have been very well-received by guests and employees. We really tried to make the hotel more user-friendly with some of the technological upgrades, including additional TVs, iPod stations and computers with Internet access. We also added a Starbucks in the lobby and completely overhauled the Bridge Bar. Renovations in a hotel this size are really always ongoing. For instance, we recently completed renovations to our workout facility, which not only updated the equipment, but also added a lot of usable space.

The carpet was selected by an interior design firm in California. The carpet and other décor are designed to carry the story and feel of Music City into the hotel. We wanted guests to remember that they're in Music City when they stay here, unlike a lot of hotels where you feel as though you could be in any random city when you're inside.

Q: The economic climate continues to be challenging for the tourism industry. How has the Renaissance Nashville Hotel fared during the recession? Have you noticed an increase in business in 2010, and what's the forecast for the rest of the year?

A: Everyone in the industry has been affected, and we're no different. But Nashville wasn't hit as hard as other comparable cities, and within the Nashville market we've done better than our competitors. We're very fortunate to be next to the convention center, and that's a big reason our volume has been steady. So far, 2010 has been up from this time last year. And we're very optimistic about the rest of the year and beyond, especially with the potential

Medical Mart moving into the convention center.

Q: What's your take on the Music City Center? What do you hope will happen to the existing convention center once the MCC opens? How will it affect the Renaissance?

A: I support the new convention center and think it's important for our local economy. I also think it creates a great opportunity for new growth if we can land the Medical Mart.

Q: What advice would you give to young professionals in the tourism and hospitality industry to put them in a position to be successful?

A: It's actually a pretty good time for young professionals to get into the industry. Marriott hasn't hired new college graduates for the past three years, but recently announced that it would start hiring new graduates again. This is a good sign for our company and for the industry. When looking for a job in this industry, I'd recommend three tips:

1. Research the company you're applying for a job with. Make sure it's a growing company, like Marriott.
2. Enjoy serving people. There is a misconception in our industry that being a people person and serving people is the same thing, but it's not. Being a people person isn't enough; you have to be able to serve people too. If you can't or don't want to do this, you will fail in this industry.
3. The last tip is simple. Take care of the people you work with.

Q: Is there a single memory – maybe a celebrity you met or crisis you faced – that has stayed with you since taking over as GM at the hotel?

A: Meeting Ronald Reagan is at the top of the list in terms of celebrity encounters. But April 16, 1998, will always be a day I remember as well. A tornado touched down in downtown Nashville. It was frightening for everyone in the hotel, but I'm proud of the way our staff and guests handled the situation. No one was harmed, and that's the most important thing.

Meet Matt McCoy: Maintenance Technician



Q: How long have you worked for Metro DES?

A: I started working for Metro DES on December 15, 2003. Prior to that, I worked for Nashville Thermal Transfer Corporation (NTTC). I started working for NTTC in September of 1994.

Q: For those who don't know what a maintenance technician's role is, please tell us a little bit about your day-to-day responsibilities.

A: My day-to-day responsibilities vary a great deal. As a maintenance technician, my first priority is resolving any problems at the plant or in the system – leaks in the lines or issues with the boilers and chillers – that could have an immediate impact on the system's performance.

But I'm also regularly checking on all the equipment in the plant and lines in the system to make sure we don't have any issues that could cause problems with the system's performance down the road. Some days I'm at the plant for most of my shift, and some days I'm out in the field checking on the system for most of my shift. I like that aspect of the job a lot because I never know where I'll be from one day to the next. It keeps things fresh.

Q: What path led you to where you are? What did you do before joining DES that prepared you to be successful?

A: The military was an important part of my career path. I'm a Desert Storm veteran, and just being over there was an eye-opening experience. I was a machinist mate in the Navy, which is very similar to what I do now at DES.

Also, working for NTTC really prepared me for my job at DES. At NTTC, the work was dirty, hot and really tough, for the most part. And we had to work longer hours to provide the same services DES provides. I feel like that really prepared me for any challenges my current job could present.

Q: What's your favorite thing about your job?

A: The people. Most of us came from NTTC, and we've known one another for several years.

Q: Typically, most people think of spring as a time to save money on energy costs, at least in their residence. Can businesses on DES' system also expect to see savings during spring, or is it noticeable only in residential houses?

A: Yes, the same principles apply to large, commercial buildings in the spring months. Obviously, it's not as easy as opening a few windows when it comes to some of the large buildings on the DES system; but moderate temperatures in the spring should result in lower energy costs.

Q: Has the construction for the Music City Center had any effect on DES' services or on the system in general yet? Will it be an issue as construction moves forward?

A: So far the construction has not had any effect on DES' services, other than maybe adding a couple of minutes to DES employees' commute time to work. It's hard for me to say what, if any, effect the construction will have on the system at this point. But I do know that DES has the capacity to add the Music City Center to the system without affecting any of our other customers' service.

Q: If you weren't a maintenance technician at Metro DES, what would you like to do?

A: I'd probably be doing something in the same field. I love working with my hands, and that's what I'm really good at, so I wouldn't want to change professions entirely.

Q: What do you like to do when you're not on the job?

A: Woodworking, hunting, fishing, riding ATVs and working on things around the house.

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