THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

SoCalGas, California Energy Commission Collaborate to Advance Hyperlight Technology: Low-Cost, Utility-Scale Renewable Power Clean, Sustainable Energy to Help Agribusiness, Food Processing Industry, More

BRAWLEY, Calif., May 8, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- Southern California Gas Co. (SoCalGas) has joined with the California Energy Commission to support the commercialization of a low-cost, commercial-scale solar thermal energy technology with the promise to help businesses save money, conserve energy and support California's environmental goals.

Currently operating at the San Diego State University (SDSU) Center for Energy Sustainability in Brawley, Calif., the Hyperlight solar thermal technology harnesses the sun's energy using an innovative, low-cost design. Water-filled trays support solar reflectors in long, transparent tubes that aim sunlight onto a heat collecting element. The high-efficiency system produces high-temperature steam that can serve a range of commercial and agricultural business applications.

"SoCalGas is excited to be part of this innovative demonstration that supports California's goals and policies for a sustainable energy future and emission reductions," said Patrick Lee, senior vice president of customer service, innovation and business strategy for SoCalGas. "We are pleased to support technologies like Hyperlight that supplement natural gas while reducing emissions. SoCalGas continues to support innovation on behalf of customers to maximize the potential of abundant, low-cost natural gas while advancing our state's environmental goals."

"The Energy Commission has long supported and invested in innovative clean energy solutions," said Energy Commission Chair Robert B. Weisenmiller. "Its low cost design should drive down the costs of solar even more as we strive to make it more mainstream and achieve our 33 percent Renewables Portfolio Standard target by 2020."

The Commission and SoCalGas provided $2 million in funding for the Hyperlight technology development and demonstration project through the Commission's Public Interest Energy Research (PIER) program and SoCalGas own innovation development initiatives. PIER supports public interest research and development that helps improve the quality of life in California by bringing environmentally safe, reliable, and affordable energy services and products to the marketplace.

"Hyperlight's design represents a fundamental reinvention of solar thermal from the ground up. Our brand new design approach allows ultra-low-cost construction, and space-efficient, low-impact infrastructure. This translates to cost savings and emissions reductions for our customers," said John King, chief executive officer of Hyperlight Energy.

The Hyperlight project is one of a number of significant renewable energy projects in development at the SDSU Center for Energy Sustainability. "SDSU is continually seeking to provide opportunities for industry to test applications, evaluate performance and hopefully develop new technology in the process," said Dr. David Pearson, Dean of the Imperial Valley Campus. "We are excited for the potential of Hyperlight Technology and pleased to be a part of its development."

Located in Imperial County, the SDSU Center for Energy Sustainability promotes excellence in renewable energy research, education, and training. The Center for Energy Sustainability offers the prospect for a number of connections to educational institutions, programs and industry in the Imperial Valley and beyond.

Through an emphasis on synergistic public and private sector partnerships, the Center fosters cutting-edge renewable energy research, provides academic and professional education relevant to California's energy future, and contributes is one of the most renewable energy-rich locations in the world. Imperial County is the second largest geothermal energy producing county in the nation.

More information is available at: socalgas.com/innovation . www.energy.ca.gov ;hyperlightenergy.com ; or ivces.sdsu.edu

About Southern California Gas Co. Southern California Gas Co. has been delivering clean, safe and reliable natural gas to its customers for more than 140 years. It is the nation's largest natural gas distribution utility, providing service to 20.9 million consumers connected through nearly 5.8 million meters in more than 500 communities. The company's service territory encompasses approximately 20,000 square miles throughout central and Southern California, from Visalia to the Mexican border. Southern California Gas Co. is a regulated subsidiary of Sempra Energy SRE -0.40% .

About The California Energy Commission The California Energy Commission is the state's primary energy policy and planning agency. Created by the Legislature in 1974 and located in Sacramento, six basic responsibilities guide the Energy Commission as it sets state energy policy: forecasting future energy needs; licensing thermal power plants 50 megawatts or larger; promoting energy efficiency and conservation by setting the state's appliance and building efficiency standards; supporting public interest energy research that advances energy science and technology through research, development, and demonstration programs; developing renewable energy resources and alternative renewable energy technologies for buildings, industry and transportation; planning for and directing state response to energy emergencies. For more information, visit:www.energy.ca.gov

About Hyperlight Energy With roots in years of pioneering research, Hyperlight Energy is a clean energy technology company that invents, develops and manufactures innovative products and services for augmentation of industrial and other large-scale energy-intensive facilities. Hyperlight Energy is changing how the world makes and uses energy.

About San Diego State University Center for Energy Sustainability The San Diego State University Center for Energy Sustainability, located in the heart of California's Imperial Valley, America's epicenter for renewable energy production, promotes excellence in renewable energy research, education and training. Through its emphasis on synergistic public and private sector partnerships, the Center fosters cutting-edge renewable energy research, provides academic and professional education relevant to California's energy future, and contributes to the social and economic development of the Imperial Valley.