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Controller reduces motor energy usage

Power Efficiency Corp. offers a solid-state efficiency controller for electric motors that can cut energy use by up to 40 percent, depending on the application.

The Las Vegas-based company sold 28 of the E-Save motor-efficiency controllers to Berry Plastics Corp. The units are installed on 24 granulators at Berry's factory in Anaheim, Calif. The local utility ran tests and showed annual energy consumption will be reduced by more 195,000 kilowatt hours, cutting electricity costs for the plant by \$17,600. That is an energy savings of more than 40 percent, and a payback on the investment in less than two years, Power Efficiency said.

Granulators are a major plastics machinery application, company officials said at the Plastics News Executive Forum, where Power Efficiency sponsored a one-day energy management workshop. The reason: Granulators run constantly but only grind, using a full load, when plastic is moved through. E-Save monitors the load on an electric motor and reduces the amount of power consumed by the motor when it is lightly loaded.

Sales director Gary Dusterhoft said Power Efficiency started out supplying its energy-saving controllers for escalators and elevators — two devices that also are always running but carry big loads only periodically. Now the company is moving into industrial markets, including plastics, he said March 1 at the forum in Summerlin, Nev.

The patented E-Save technology uses a microprocessor and circuitry to sense a motor's energy requirements by monitoring both voltage and electrical current.

In February, Frost & Sullivan Inc. awarded Power Efficiency the American Constant Speed Electric Motor Technology Innovation of the Year Award.

Berry, based in Evansville, Ind., is working to reduce its energy consumption companywide, according to Ken Fritts, maintenance manager.

Dusterhoft said Power Efficiency has placed E-Save motor controllers at several other major plastics processors, including Graham Packaging Co. LP and Ball Corp.

Pipe extruder Charlotte Pipe and Foundry Co. also installed an E-Save at one of its factories.

Tel. 702-697-0377, fax 702-697-0379, e-mail gdusterhoft@powerefficiency.com.