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## **ELECTRICAL SAFETY EDUCATION GETS BOOST FROM SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC NORTH AMERICAN OPERATING DIVISION**

Palatine, Ill. May 1, 2005 – Schneider Electric's North American Operating Division has extended its longstanding support of electrical safety education with a \$25,000 donation for 2005 to the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI).

Based in Arlington, Va., ESFI seeks to reduce electrical-related deaths and injuries through vigilant public education keeping electrical safety top of mind, and to give the general public, school children and the workforce tips and tools to use to prevent deadly and destructive electrical accidents.

This year's donation to the ESFI campaign is one of many by the North American Division of Schneider Electric, best known in the U.S. for its flagship Square D brand of electrical distribution and control products, systems and services. The company is the only Platinum Beacon sponsor of the ESFI, having fulfilled a five-year, \$500,000 contribution pledged in 1999 to the ESFI endowment campaign to support electrical safety education.

Michael G. Clendenin, executive director of ESFI, said that while electrical safety technology for the home continues to improve, the need for basic understanding of safety measures never diminishes. More than 73,000 family dwelling electrical system fires occur each year. More than 50 percent of home electrical fires are attributed to arcing, leading to nearly 600 deaths, over 2,000 injuries and \$1 billion in property damage annually.

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“We’re grateful to Schneider Electric for supporting our mission to help individuals enhance their safety by following basic guidelines and to keep abreast of new products that add to the security of one’s home,” said Clendenin. “Our sponsors demonstrate a strong, sincere interest in protecting consumers through their own efforts and through their support of ESFI activities.”

Clendenin said such donations allow the Foundation to sponsor National Electrical Safety Month each May, and to produce resources and outreach programs designed to raise public awareness of electrical hazards and safety tips. The Foundation’s National Electrical Safety Month campaign kit, or “May kit” provides companies and communities all they need to engage in an electrical safety awareness campaign of their own, offering home safety tips related to, for example, electrical appliances and outlets, power cords, extension cords, power strips and surge suppressors. Kits and other EFSI publications can be downloaded at <http://www.electrical-safety.org>.

David D. Petratis, president and C.E.O. of Schneider Electric North American Operating Division, said electrical safety has been the priority of the organization for more than 100 years. Square D Company was formally incorporated in 1903 by Bryson D. Horton and James B. McCarthy with the invention of the first metal, all enclosed electrical safety switch for factories. The company went on to set the standard for the metal-enclosed safety switch, the modern residential circuit breaker and a host of other electrical innovations – protecting people’s lives while efficiently distributing, managing and controlling electricity.

“Our business has been and always will be dedicated to the safe and reliable distribution and control of electrical power,” said Petratis. “Our support for ESFI is a natural extension of who we are and what we believe in.”

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### **Schneider Electric North American Operating Division**

Headquartered in Palatine, Ill., the North American Operating Division of Schneider Electric had sales of \$2.6 billion (U.S.) in 2004. The North American Operating Division is one of four operating divisions of Schneider Electric, headquartered in Paris, France, and markets the Square D, Telemecanique and Merlin Gerin brand products to customers in the United States, Canada and Mexico. In the United States, Schneider Electric is best known by its flagship Square D brand, with Telemecanique becoming increasingly known in the industrial control and automation markets and supported by many Square D distributors. For 100 years, Square D has been a market-leading brand of electrical distribution and industrial control products, systems and services. Schneider Electric is a global electrical industry leader with 2004 sales of approximately \$12.8 billion (U.S.). Visit Schneider Electric on the Internet at:

- Corporate – <http://www.us.schneider-electric.com>
- Telemecanique Products – <http://www.us.telemecanique.com>
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