

Annual Electric Bike Sales Expected to Climb

When most people in the developed world think of electric vehicles, they envision the Nissan Leaf or perhaps a golf cart. But battery-powered electric bicycles are a huge market. And Pike Research, a market research firm in Boulder, Colo., forecasts that by 2018, electric bike sales will approach 48 million units. That compares to the global market in 2012 of 30 million units.

China is currently the largest market for electric bikes, and Pike expects that country to account for sales of more than 42 million bicycles in 2018. By contrast, the North American market will only grow to 340,000 units, from

just over 100,000 this year.

According to Pike, urbanization and the need for low-cost personal transportation is driving the growth of electric bicycles in the developing world. In Asia, the most popular design is a throttle-controlled, scooter-style vehicle with a sealed lead-acid battery. The bikes are relatively cheap, with the average price in China running about \$167. (Electric bicycles in North America, by contrast, average more than \$800.)

Lithium-ion battery packs for electric bikes are forecast to become more common. But even by 2018, Pike expects Li-ion batteries to power less than 12 percent of the market.

PRA, Hazard Analysis for Nuclear Utilities

Two engineering firms have entered an agreement to work together in providing site hazard evaluation and probabilistic risk assessment services to the U.S. nuclear power sector.

According to the companies, URS Corp. and Scientech, their combined resources make them able to address all external hazards. They say they can provide utilities with solutions to emerging needs and requirements, including responding to near-term task force recommendations, requirements of Generic Issue 199 (Implications of

Updated Probabilistic Seismic Hazard Estimates in Central and Eastern United States on Existing Plants), Post-Fukushima requests meeting the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Regulatory Guideline 1.200, Rev. 2 expectations, and the ASME/ANS PRA Standard (RA-Sa-2009).

Scientech, owned by Curtiss-Wright Flow Control Co., has provided risk assessment services for more than 25 years. URS Corp. provides engineering, construction, and technical services to public agencies and private sector companies.

Engine Developer Buys Australian Company

Canadian developer of natural gas-fueled engines has purchased assets of an Australian company that has designed electronic fuel injection and engine-management technologies.

Westport Innovations Inc., based in Vancouver, British Columbia, said the purchase covers "certain assets" of Advanced Engine Components Ltd. of Perth, Western Australia, involving a payment in cash and assumption of liabilities. The transaction was made through a subsidiary, Westport Innovations (Australia) Pty Ltd.

Westport acquired AEC's Australian business assets including its intellectual property, key contracts, inventory, and fixed assets. Westport also assumed AEC's Australian leased facility and hired almost a dozen of AEC's employees.

Advanced Engine Components will

retain inventory and contracts for its business in China, its principal market for natural gas vehicle systems. AEC's engine component products are aimed at optimizing engine performance while lowering vehicle emissions and costs.

Original equipment manufacturers that currently use AEC products include Tata Motors Ltd.

Chinese Manufacturer to Build U.S. Pipe Plant

A manufacturer based in Tianjin, China, Tianjin Pipe (Group) Corp., has hired Jacobs Engineering Group Inc. to provide project management consulting services for a new pipe rolling mill near Corpus Christi, Texas.

The estimated of the total program's value is about \$1 billion.

Jacobs said its Houston and Shanghai operations will be responsible for the project management consulting services. Jacobs is expected to assist Tianjin Pipe with the coordination and management of engineering, procurement, and construction, which are expected to draw on professional services, materials, and labor from the United States, Europe, and China.

The mill, located in Gregory, Texas, near the Port of Corpus Christi, is scheduled to be delivered with phased completions between December 2012 and end of 2014.

BRIEFLY NOTED

Newark/element14 has entered a partnership with **PCB Assembly Express** to provide its quick design and assembly prototyping services to North American customers. The services, primarily for printed circuit boards, are accessible through a section of the element 14 website called the Knode. /// The **AK Steel** Zanesville Works has been recognized by the **Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation** for outstanding safety performance. The plant was recognized for operating all of 2011 without a lost-time injury or illness, and also for operating 3,932,145 hours without a lost-time injury between April 21, 2003, and Dec. 31, 2011. /// **Caterpillar Logistics Inc.** has added a parts distribution center in San Luis Potosi, Mexico. The facility, which will employ up to 150 people, is expected to be operational in 2013. According to Caterpillar, "This investment represents the first of many aimed at enhancing parts distribution operations in Central and South America."