Technical Bulletins: NASA-Developed "Power Factor Controller"

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NASA-DEVELOPED "POWER FACTOR CONTROLLER"

MTAS' technical bulletin of March 1, 1979, on "TRANSIENT VOLTAGE/POWER SUPPRESSORS," reproduced a report issued by the Council of Better Business Bureaus; the essence of that report was that certain devices being marketed as energy-savers are worthless. Upon reading our bulletin, a professor at U.T. reported that he had seen a TV interview with a NASA representative which presented conflicting information that such a device has been perfected and is effective.

We contacted NASA to obtain full information; they indicated that so many requests had been received that there would be a delay in providing it. We received on April 3 a copy of NASA Tech Brief MFS-23280 which describes a "Power Factor Controller" on which NASA owns the patent. Their report indicates that the device actually saves power on most electric motors, ranging from 65 per cent in a no load condition to zero under full load.

MTAS does not intend any endorsement or warranty of this product, but since we relayed the previous warning information and probably created some confusion thereby, we thought that this information should be provided.

Following are a few highlights from the report:

* It applies to induction type electric motors--the most common type used in home appliances and by industry, and to both single-phase and three-phase motors.

* Tests at the Marshall Space Flight Center showed 40 to 60 per cent savings on most motors at no load, and 2 to 6 per cent savings on small motors at rated loads.

* A large textile manufacturer ran a 500-hour test with two identical 1/2 hp three-phase motors performing identical tasks--the one equipped with a Power Factor Controller used 33 per cent less energy than the other motor without this device.

* One company has advertised the device for $13.62, to be used on 1 hp single-phase motors, in quantities of 1,000. NASA will issue licenses for production, and the report listed 10 companies as presently licensed.

(over)
The companies listed by NASA are:

Electronic Relays, Inc.
1438 Brook Drive
Downers Grove, IL 60515
Attn: Joseph Pacente
312/620-4646

Improvement Via Electronics Co.
17402 Coronado LN.
Huntingdon Beach, CA 92647
Attn: Gen. Mgr. Edward Yrissari
714/842-2925

W. J. Purcell Co.
4315 Myrtle Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 43236
Attn: Pres. Desmond J. Neville
513/791-1131

Controlled Power Corp.
2542 237th Street
Torrance, CA 90505
Attn: Fred A. Meyer, Jr.
213/539-5440

ADELET-PLM DIV.
Scott & Felzer Co.
4801 W. 150th Street
Cleveland, OH 44135
Attn: Maw H. Lee
216/267-9000

Electronic Assemblies Co.
1601 Hull Street
Richmond, VA 23224
Attn: Gerald F. Wilkinson
804/231-0132

Energy Masters, Inc.
3188 Airway Ave., Bldg. F
Costa Mesa, CA 92626
Attn: Pres. Palmer B. Ford
714/556-4921

N.R.G. Products, Inc.
P.O. Box 512
Vineland, NJ 08360
Attn: Fred L. Hurban
609/691-6699

Clinton Industries, Inc.
700 Washington Ave.
Carlstadt, NJ 07072
Attn: Angelo Pirrello
201/935-4242

Energy Vent, Inc.
423 Rita Street
Dayton, OH 45404
Attn: John Prikkel
513/222-7749

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