



Press Release

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USNAP ALLIANCE AND EPRI TO COMBINE INTERFACE SPECIFICATIONS, CONTRIBUTING TO A SINGLE STANDARD FOR SMART RESIDENTIAL DEVICES

Nashville, TN. (March 30, 2011) – The USNAP Alliance and the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) announced today the joint development of a single modular interface specification combining elements of the EPRI Demand Response Socket Interface Specification and the USNAP Alliance 2.0 specification. This effort was prompted by a request from the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Home-to-Grid Domain Expert Working Group (H2G DEWG) to harmonize the two bodies of work, in preparation for delivery to a standards development organization.

Research indicates that it is in the public's best interest to have a standard physical interface that allows smart appliances, energy management consoles, and other consumer products to support a variety of user-installable communication modules. Such an interface could provide consumers and manufacturers with reduced risk of end device obsolescence due to evolving communication technologies. It would also provide flexibility for utilities, allowing the communication systems used for load management to be selected and evolved based on individual needs and circumstances. A modular interface can enhance customer choice, stimulate competition and foster innovation.

The EPRI collaborative research project, initiated in 2008, developed a socket interface specification for residential devices that support simple demand response commands and pass-through messages from a utility or load controlling entity. The EPRI project engaged a number of residential device manufacturers (water heaters, HVAC, pool equipment, white-goods, consoles, etc.), communication technology providers (Wi-Fi, AMI, PLC, HAN, Cellular, etc.) and electric utilities to identify requirements and draft a specification.

The USNAP Alliance published its 2.0 specification in 2010 defining a low-cost physical interface enabling appliances and other consumer products to share energy related information from utilities and service providers. Using the popular Serial Peripheral Interface (SPI) communication port found in most integrated

circuits, the USNAP Specification facilitates connectivity between Smart Grid Devices (SGDs) and Universal Communication Modules (UCMs) installed in a Home Area Network (HAN), Local Area Network (LAN) and Wide Area Network (WAN).

“The two specifications are similar in technical approach and are nearly identical in their basic purpose. Each has broad industry support and provides the range of benefits associated with communication modularity,” said Brian Seal, senior project manager for EPRI “We are making great progress in merging the specifications, retaining the best attributes from each and coordinating with related standards organizations.”

“Consumers are already purchasing USNAP enabled products through national retailers to help them manage their energy consumption” said Jon Rappaport, chairman of the USNAP Alliance. “This collaboration project unifies efforts in this area and simply gives manufacturers, utilities, service providers and consumers access to a larger number of consumer products that can react to energy related information from utilities and ISOs.”

About USNAP Alliance

The USNAP Alliance is an open industry association publishing industry specifications for connecting energy aware consumer products with energy interfaces such as smart meters and energy system interfaces. The Alliance publishes specifications, tests and certifies products and provides information to consumers, utilities and vendors on the benefits of the standard. Alliance membership is comprised of utilities, manufacturers, consultants and other parties interested in developing or deploying the standard. For more information, or to find out how to join the Alliance, please visit www.usnap.org.

About EPRI

The Electric Power Research Institute, Inc. (EPRI, www.epri.com) conducts research and development relating to the generation, delivery and use of electricity for the benefit of the public. An independent, nonprofit organization, EPRI brings together its scientists and engineers as well as experts from academia and industry to help address challenges in electricity, including reliability, efficiency, health, safety and the environment. EPRI's members represent more than 90 percent of the electricity generated and delivered in the United States, and international participation extends to 40 countries. EPRI's principal offices and laboratories are located in Palo Alto, Calif.; Charlotte, N.C.; Knoxville, Tenn.; and Lenox, Mass.

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