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EES scheduled to execute Consol Glass furnace rebuild in record time

Electrical Engineering Solutions (EES) is currently embarking on a challenging furnace rebuild appointment, which is scheduled to be done within a very strict construction window. The client, Consol Glass, is the largest glass manufacturer in Africa and the rebuild is at its Bellville plant near Cape Town.

An ISO 9000 certified professional services company, EES is a leader in project managing the provision of Information Technology (IT) solutions to the built environment. Integral to its business is intelligent infrastructure, the implementation of which entails the convergence of IT and Building Automation Systems (BAS).

The project involves the Electrical and Instrumentation (E&I) infrastructure engineering for the furnace. EES is responsible for the management, construction and commissioning of E&I infrastructure, which includes interfacing with bespoke technology vendors.

The Bellville plant has a total of four furnaces which manufacture bottles for the food and beverage industry. EES and Consol Glass have a long-standing working relationship, and in 2007 EES upgraded Bellville furnace 1 (B1). A furnace of a similar design to that installed for B1 is now being installed for Bellville furnace 4 (B4).

The existing B4 furnace produces about 285 tons of glass per day, and the rebuilt B4 furnace will increase capacity to about 320 tons per day. Currently the entire Bellville plant produces between 950 and 980 tons a day, and makes on average approximately 1.8 million to 2 million bottles each day.

The different parties involved are working in close co-operation to meet the stringent project deadline. Construction execution, which follows months of strategic planning and preparatory work, will take no longer than 90 days.

“The reason for the tight project deadline is that this particular furnace makes flint (clear) containers and is the only facility in the country capable of producing baby food jars and extremely light weight wine bottles,” explains Craig Findlay, Technical Manager at Consol Glass. “As a result we are under pressure to supply sufficient stock to the customers who take these bottles while the furnace is out of production for almost three months of the rebuild.”

Bradley Hemphill, Managing Director of EES, says that this is a particularly high pressure project. "There is no scope for a time overrun. We are therefore doing whatever it takes to meet the deadline, whether this means working through the night or over weekends."

He adds that this challenging job utilizes the strong administrative ability and special project skills base that EES offers.

Findlay comments: "What differentiates EES is their very structured and systematic way of handing projects, from design right through to installation and commissioning. They document everything: design as built drawings, commissioning and handover documents, and we feel that this sets them apart from others.

"In addition they are involved hands-on on site, with the contractors during the installation and commissioning phases of a project," Findlay says.

Hemphill concludes: "Consol Glass prides itself in its customer- and consumer-driven culture. It is therefore essential that its service providers enable it to meet customer requirements. We are committed to meeting their needs."

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Electrical Engineering Solutions (EES) company profile:

Electrical Engineering Solutions (EES) is an ISO 9000, professional services company, offering engineering, project management and business management services in all sectors of industry throughout Africa and other emerging markets.

It is a leader in project managing the provision of Information Technology (IT) solutions to the built environment. Integral to its business is intelligent infrastructure, the implementation of which entails the convergence of IT and Building Automation Systems (BAS).

A benefit of intelligent infrastructure is that it facilitates energy management, thus contributing to the urgent global objective to establish a green environment. EES is a member company of the Green Building Council of South Africa.

The firm is proud to have played a significant role in the 2010 World Cup in the special systems design of five infrastructure projects: Cape Town Stadium, Nelson Mandela Bay Stadium in Port Elizabeth, Cape Town International Airport, King Shaka International Airport (KSIA) north of Durban and the Gautrain Sandton Station.

Based in Cape Town since 2001, the firm also has specialist experience in communication networks and related IT, security systems and 11kV and 400V electrical systems that support intelligent infrastructure.

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For further information please contact:

Annabel Eaton
Corporate Communication Services (CCS)
tel: +27 (0) 21 702 3550 (CT, South Africa)
cell: 082 8984878
e-mail: eatona@netactive.co.za