



MINNESOTA WIRE

Press Release  
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Life Saving Connections

## Minnovate Receives R&D Contract Award

**St. Paul, Minnesota: - 01/03/2011** – Minnesota Wire’s R&D products division, *Minnovate*, was notified last week that it was awarded a Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) contract by the U.S. Air Force. AF103-204 was a competitive request for proposal late last year by the Air Force Research Lab (AFRL) at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. Titled “*Improved Data and Power Transmission: Conductor and Shielding*,” the program is intended to develop improved components for airborne vehicles that are lighter and more resilient to electromagnetic interference (EMI).

AFRL’s initiative in this field reflects aggressive R&D efforts by the U.S. military in two key areas: first, ways to provide significant fuel savings by decreasing the weight of both manned and unmanned aircraft, both for cost savings and for mission endurance; and second, addressing the increasing technology demands of the more electrically-based aircraft of today, and the expected use of high powered directed energy applications in combat environments that will create additional EMI challenges in the future.

The nine-month, \$100,000 contract will begin in early 2011 as an SBIR Phase I program to demonstrate proof of concept for the Air Force’s needs. Minnovate will bring to bear its mature developmental work in carbon nanotubes (CNT) for conductors and shields funded by previous U.S. military R&D programs and investment by Minnesota Wire. Northrop Grumman, as a prime contractor and systems integrator for aerospace vehicles, has enormous interest in the technology and will be a partner for Minnesota Wire during the project. Minnovate’s CNT initiatives use proprietary materials and processes for significant weight savings, resistance to corrosion, flexibility, and processing advantages primarily for the defense and medical markets. The anticipated benefits and potential applications of this project apply to data transmission wiring, litz wire, coaxial cable, wire harnesses, USB connectors, electronic circuitry, and component shielding, among others.

The Minnovate Team at Minnesota Wire has a greater than 50% capture rate on its federal R&D contract proposals (compared to a 10% national average), is the winner of the prestigious Tibbetts Award for SBIR excellence (2007) and received the Wire & Cable Technology International Technical Achievement Award for 2010.

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Minnesota Wire is a vertically integrated, custom manufacturer for wire, cable and interconnect assemblies to the Medical, Defense and Industrial markets. The company is a market and R&D leader in: electrical signal integrity; low noise cable; radio-translucent wire; and innovative connections for wearable electronics, patient monitoring systems and leading-edge medical devices.

The 30,000 square foot headquarters in St. Paul, Minnesota boasts a full R&D and test and measurement center, an Electromagnetic Capabilities (EMC) chamber for electronic pre-compliance testing and a “wet lab” for its nanotechnology applications. Another high-volume, 58,000 square foot focused-cell, lean production facility is located in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Minnesota Wire is ISO 9001: 2008 certified, ISO 13485: 2003 compliant, ROHS compliant, and is a MIL-STD and IPC-620 certified harness manufacturer.