



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Pioneering Virginia Utility Picks Tantalus for Fiber-Based Smart Grid

Raleigh, NC – July 7, 2010 – BVU (formerly Bristol Virginia Utilities) has become the ninth Tennessee Valley Authority electric distributor to use Tantalus as its Smart Grid communications platform, and the fourth straight utility-owned broadband provider in the region to select the technology.

Tantalus Systems Inc. will provide BVU with a Smart Grid solution that operates over OptiNet, the Fiber to the Home (FTTH) network deployed by the city in 2003. OptiNet offers high-speed, high-capacity connectivity to the utility's 16,000 electric and 8,000 water accounts located in the City of Bristol as well as to customers at the farthest ends of its southwest Virginia service area.

"The pace of Smart Grid deployments in the Tennessee Valley is like nowhere else," said Eric Murray, Tantalus' President & CEO. "Our technology is proving to be a perfect fit for utilities like Bristol that serve both urban and rural customers, whether they use a wired system, a wireless system, or a combination of the two."

"The frequency of data transactions is increasing by orders of magnitude," added Murray. "A utility must be certain that network efficiency will not diminish as traffic skyrockets. In addition to a high capacity, low latency backbone network, it's equally important that there are no congestion points on the local area network."

The wireless Tantalus LAN is designed so data moves efficiently between the utility and every endpoint, regardless of whether a premise is connected directly to the FTTH network. This configuration ensures a smooth evolution as time-of-use pricing, load shedding, customer signalling and advanced distribution automation applications become more prevalent.

Broadband is credited for breathing new life into the region, according to Wes Rosenbalm, BVU's President & CEO. "Here, triple-play has translated into high-paying jobs, incredible educational opportunities and a local economy built to thrive during tough times."

It has also filled the utility's trophy case. Among BVU's recent honors are a National League of Cities' Gold Medal for Municipal Excellence, awards for community service and environmental sustainability from the American Public Power Association, being named the Community Broadband Fiber Network of the Year by the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors, and being singled out at the 2009 *Building the Broadband Economy Summit* as a world-leading Intelligent Community.

"We've seen first-hand how broadband can transform a community by attracting business and improving quality of life," said Rosenbalm. "Our sights are now set on implementing a Smart Grid that will have the same positive impact on the way energy is distributed and managed. The ability to leverage OptiNet for additional cost and energy savings will continue to pay off for years to come."

"Bristol is a community that invests intelligently in its future," said Murray. "It was the first U.S. municipality to offer phone, cable and data services over a community-owned fiber network. Now it has created a Homerun™ network by adding Smart Grid functionality that will help ensure both economic and environmental sustainability as well as enabling BVU to maintain a very high level of customer service."

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About BVU

BVU (formerly Bristol Virginia Utilities), is a public utility that provides electric, water, wastewater, cable, voice and advanced fiber-optic broadband services to customers in greater Bristol, Va., and parts of Washington County, Va. BVU OptiNet also provides cable, voice and advanced fiber-optic broadband services to customers in Abingdon, Va. and surrounding communities. BVU OptiNet also spans a 125-square-mile area that includes digital data and voice services branded, as OptiNet, serving business customers in Dickenson, Tazewell, Buchanan and Russell counties in Virginia. For more information, visit www.bvu-optinet.com.

About Tantalus

Tantalus provides two-way, real-time data communications networks to monitor and control electric, gas and water utilities. TUNet® – the Tantalus Utility Network – is an end-to-end WAN/LAN/HAN communications system that operates with 220 MHz RF and IP-based networks including Fiber, WiMAX and GPRS/cellular, either individually or in combination. TUNet's patented and patents pending technologies are purpose built for the Smart Grid. The Tantalus network unites a utility's applications, making advanced metering, outage management, power quality monitoring, load control, and distribution automation cost-effective and practical throughout both urban and rural service areas. For more information, please visit www.tantalus.com.

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