Case Study: Arcing Problems

The Unit: 250 MW Westinghouse

The Problem A large power company in the midwest noticed ongoing arcing and sparking on this particular unit.

The Cause The brushes were bound and hanging up inside the brush holders inhibiting brush movement, causing the arcing (electrical erosion) and compromising the brush to ring connection. The end result was a rapid wearing of the collector ring, and brushes placing the unit at risk for further damage and a catastrophic shut down.

1. The Solutions Cutsforth Online Truing:
Cutsforth was asked to perform it’s Online Truing Service every 12-15 months over a five year period. Our online, under-load truing process dramatically lowered the vibrations and kept their unit operating online. The customer did not need to wait for a scheduled outage to get the work done.

2. The Cutsforth EASYchange Online Removable Brush Holder System
We recommended Cutsforth’s EASYchange holders to solve the customers problems with their existing brush holders. *Once EASYchange was installed this unit’s collector rings have never needed truing/grinding again.* It’s been 5 years since our EASYchange brush holders were installed. This brush holder retrofit has saved this company $70,000 in ring truing/grinding costs to date. *Fewer ring grindings mean increased collector ring life, saving thousands more.*

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Before: Arcing On Aftermarket Brush Holders

After: EASYchange Brush Holder Solved Arcing Problems

This customer continues to be an enthusiastic supporter of Cutsforth’s EASYchange brush holder due to the increased reliability and decreased forced maintenance outages they had come to accept as “normal.” Plant personnel appreciated the ease of use and increased safety.