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USFCC Lauds UN Decision to Adopt New UN Shipping Description for Fuel Cell Cartridges

(Washington D.C. – December 13, 2004) The US Fuel Cell Council (USFCC) applauded last Friday's formal adoption by the United Nations (UN) Committee of Experts of a new and clear shipping description for "fuel cell cartridges" containing flammable liquids in Class 3 within the UN Model Regulations.

"Before our industry ramps up for market introduction of fuel cell products, we need to make sure regulations like these are in place that will allow the products to be used and transported by consumers worldwide," said USFCC Executive Director Robert Rose. "The US Fuel Cell Council recognizes that we need to take the lead on getting these types of obstacles removed so that fuel cells can be introduced to consumers with no hindrances to their use."

This newly adopted UN model regulation will be forwarded to international transportation modal agencies and to all nations for implementation within their own rule making cycles. Until this model regulation is implemented, methanol "fuel cell cartridges" are regarded as methanol "containers" under UN regulation.

Regulating "fuel cell cartridges" as "containers" fails to recognize that the cartridges are safer, because consumers do not have access to the contents and the likelihood of leakage in transportation is very low. The US Fuel Cell Council's Portable Power Working Group advised the Department of Transportation in submitting a proposal to the UN to specifically assign "fuel cell cartridges" to a unique shipping description in Class 3, helping to recognize these important safety distinctions.

The US Fuel Cell Council and its members continue to work in getting international allowance to use methanol fuel cells and cartridges in the cabins of commercial aircraft. This UN adoption for cargo shipping is an achievement that will help with this work. The Portable Power Working Group has established a Methanol Micro Fuel Cells sub-site on the US Fuel Cell Council's web site, providing information on these industry efforts:
<http://www.usfcc.com/usfcc/methanol/index.html>.

The USFCC is the industry association for the fuel cell industry. For more information on USFCC, check out our web site at www.usfcc.com.

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