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Rapid installation of ABB drive keeps sea lions on view

Colchester Zoo avoids disappointing visitors to one of its most popular attractions following the rapid installation of an ABB variable speed drive (VSD) to replace a failed unit.

Following a power cut, the non-ABB installed drive on the ozone pump in the zoo's sea lion enclosure reported an under-voltage fault when attempts were made to re-start it.

ABB authorised value provider, Gibbons Engineering Group, received the call from the zoo at 08:00 and had an engineer on site within two hours. After determining that the installed drive was damaged, a replacement 22 kW ABB drive was collected from Gibbons' stock. Mains and control connections were set up and the pump was operational again by 13:00.

The VSD plays a vital role in keeping the sea lion tank clean and the mammals healthy. Craig Hamnett, electrician for Colchester Zoo, says: "It was important that we get the pump back in operation within 24 hours, otherwise algae would develop in the pool, seriously degrading its clarity. This would have meant disappointing visitors to this popular attraction."

The ozone pump is one of four pumps operated in the enclosure. Ozone is converted from ordinary oxygen in the ozone generator. The ozone is then pumped into the water by the ozone pump. This kills bacteria and is a vital stage in keeping the enclosure healthy.

The sea lion enclosure, named Playa Patagonia, features a 2.5 million litre water tank complete with an underwater glass tunnel that allows visitors to see the sea lions swimming. The enclosure is currently home to five female Patagonian sea lions but can hold as many as 12.

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Caption: Colchester Zoo's sea lions remain on show as ABB drive installation goes swimmingly.

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