

RTE and Nexans launch a new industrial initiative to recycle aluminum from high- and extra high-voltage cables in France

PRESS RELEASE

- **RTE and Nexans combine their expertise and announce the launch of a complete industrial aluminum recycling solution for the manufacturing of power cables.**
- **For the first time in France, cables from the electricity transmission network will be recycled for reuse on RTE's high and extra-high voltage lines.**
- **Based entirely in Europe, this activity will also cut CO₂e¹ emissions owing to the lower carbon impact of recycled aluminum.**

Paris, July 10, 2025 – RTE, the French electricity transmission system operator is combining its expertise with Nexans, a leader in the design and manufacturing of cable systems and services as part of a process that began in 2024. Today, the two companies are announcing the launch of a complete industrial aluminum recycling solution for the manufacturing of power cables. For the first time in France, cables from the electricity transmission network will be recycled for reuse on RTE's high and extra-high voltage lines.

Based entirely in Europe, this activity will recycle 600 metric tons of aluminum per year, from 1,000 metric tons of cables (equivalent to half of the power cables to be dismantled by RTE in 2025). It will also cut CO₂e emissions by at least 400 metric tons per year² owing to the lower carbon impact of recycled aluminum.

Implementing a recycling loop for network equipment in France and Europe is a strategic component of the network development plan (SDDR 2025) presented by RTE on February 13. The challenge is twofold: to use French and European sources for the production and supply of raw materials, and to reduce the carbon footprint of the supplies required for network maintenance and development. Nexans is also committed to the circular economy and the recycling of metal in order to support the growing demands of the electrical industry in a more virtuous way.

Aluminum is one of the main materials with the technical characteristics to be recycled while continuing to meet the stringent technical standards required for use in the electricity transmission network. Over the next fifteen years, aluminum waste from the renewal of high-voltage cables will make up around one-quarter of the overall aluminum requirements of the entire RTE network. Recycled aluminum has a carbon impact between 10 and 20 times lower than that of primary aluminum³, and therefore has a major role to play in reducing the associated greenhouse gas emissions.

¹ CO₂e = CO₂ equivalent

² Hypothesis based on aluminum cables manufactured entirely in Europe; and a reduction of up to 1,400 metric tons in CO₂e emissions for production in countries with the highest emission levels.

³ [International Aluminium Institute](#) - 2022: Primary aluminum: 15.1t CO₂e/t aluminum; Recycled aluminum: 0.52 t CO₂e/t aluminum

In 2023, RTE set up an initial trial involving network cables in the Maine-et-Loire and Corrèze departments. The success of this trial led RTE and Nexans to create the first closed-loop recycling network (i.e. where the material is re-used for the same purpose). Specifically, Nexans is responsible for the “end-to-end” recycling of overhead cables. These cables are collected from all over France and shredded at the Recycâbles site in Noyelles-Godault in northern France before being reintegrated into the aluminum wire production chain in France. The resulting “wire rod” will then be used by Nexans to manufacture recycled cables at its plant in Elouges, Belgium.

The contract signed by Nexans and RTE makes provision for recycling around 600 metric tons of aluminum per year. Although the power cables are intended primarily for the French grid, they will also be used by other Nexans customers, who will benefit from reduced CO₂ emissions.

Further, the process will be structured to improve the traceability of used power cables, so that they can be better recycled at the end of their service life. From this year, the cables installed by RTE will contain 10% of recycled aluminum. As part of its SDDR 2025, RTE is aiming to gradually increase the proportion of recycled aluminum in its cables over the next few years, to reach 30% by 2040.

“This partnership once again underlines our commitment to sustainable, low-carbon electrification. By setting up this complete recycling loop with our close partner RTE, we are contributing to efficiency, sustainability and the preservation of global resources. We are mobilizing and supporting the entire value chain, taking the entire French and European electricity ecosystem on a virtuous and exemplary journey,” said Vincent Dessale, Nexans Senior Executive Vice President, Strategic Projects and Key Accounts.

“As part of our public service remit, we wanted to invest in forward-looking sectors contributing to the energy transition. With Nexans, we are addressing the technical challenge of recycling our cables in a high-quality, closed-loop process in Europe. Our aluminum sourcing process is becoming more circular. This illustrates RTE’s twofold ambition with regard to the supplies needed to develop its network: to invest with partners, primarily in France and Europe, and to reduce the carbon footprint of our activities,” says Thomas Veyrenc, RTE Managing Board member, Managing Director in charge of Economy, Strategy and Finance.

KEY FIGURES

- 600 metric tons of aluminum recycled in a closed loop per year
- 400 fewer metric tons of CO₂ emitted per year
- One-quarter of aluminum requirements for the electricity transmission network may come from the renewal of the high and extra-high voltage network.
- 10% of recycled aluminum in high-voltage cables from this year, with the ambition of reaching 30% in RTE’s high-voltage cables by 2040.

About Nexans

For over a century, Nexans has played a crucial role in the electrification of the planet and is committed to electrifying the future. With approximately 28,500 people in 41 countries, the Group is paving the way to a new world of safe, sustainable and decarbonized electricity that is accessible to everyone. In 2024, Nexans generated €7.1 billion in standard sales. The Group is a leader in the design and manufacturing of cable systems and services across four main business areas: PWR-Transmission, PWR-Grid, PWR-Connect and Industry & Solutions. Nexans was the first company in its industry to create a Foundation supporting sustainable initiatives, bringing access to energy to disadvantaged communities worldwide. The Group is recognized as a global leader on climate action and has committed to Net-Zero emissions by 2050 aligned with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi).

Nexans. *Electrify the Future.*

Nexans is listed on Euronext Paris, compartment A.
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About RTE

RTE is the French transmission system operator. As part of its public service remit, it guarantees the supply of electricity at all times and with the same quality of service across France, through the dedication of its 10,025 employees. RTE manages the flow of electricity while balancing production and consumption in real time. RTE maintains and develops a high and extra-high voltage network (between 63,000 and 400,000 volts) comprising almost 100,000 kilometers of overhead lines, 7,000 kilometers of underground lines and 2,900 substations, in operation or cooperation, along with some 50 cross-border lines. France has the most extensive network in Europe, with 37 interconnections with neighboring countries. As a neutral and independent industrial player in the energy transition, RTE is optimizing and transforming its network to connect new, low-carbon electricity facilities for production and consumption.

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