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ARGUS ADVISOR

News for Argus Control System Owners

This issue of the Argus Advisor describes new equipment for Titan systems to significantly reduce the risk of lightning damage and some very useful new PC system back-up and restore utilities that are now available for both Titan and Argus Classic systems.

We also describe a recommended method for accessing your Argus system using an iPhone, Blackberry, or other mobile device.

As we move forward into the next decade, we'd like to take this opportunity to thank our customers for the enthusiastic support and recommendations that have been the basis for so many of our new developments.

The launch of our Titan control platform marked the culmination of many years of research and development, and as we continue to roll out new products and refinements we'll do our best to keep you informed. We are constantly working to improve system capabilities and reliability while making the Argus system easier and more flexible to use.

It is not hard to predict that this new decade will see increasing pressure on the greenhouse industry to shift towards non fossil energy alternatives and increased efficiency in all aspects of production. Controls technologies will play a key part in this evolution. Together, we can develop sustainable solutions for the many challenges that lie ahead.



Alec Mackenzie

New Lightning Protection Components



Argus has introduced two new add-on lightning protection devices for Titan systems: the **NLP** (Network Lightning Protection), and the **NFLP** (Network Fused Lightning Protection). These devices are designed to augment existing Titan network lightning suppression components, providing enhanced protection for installations in areas where there is a high lightning risk.

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Take Control With Argus

Network Lightning Protection

Major lightning strikes can overwhelm electrical grounding systems and possibly introduce dangerous voltages if the electrical system cannot safely shunt all energy to earth. The NLP (Network Lightning Protection) device automatically shunts these very high energy electrical pulses to a local earth connection while still permitting normal power and communications through the network cabling.

The NLP is connected to 'at-risk' sections of Titan system and I/O networks. It is usually positioned at each end of long outdoor wiring runs or at building entrances so that it can intercept lightning energy before it can pass through other Titan system components.

This protection system can handle very high lightning energy discharges (many thousands of Amps), but must be connected to a good low impedance earth ground system (preferably separate from your electrical system grounds but bonded to your electrical system grounding point). A dedicated grounding rod arrangement located close to the NLP serves this purpose well.

Network Fused Lightning Protection

A Network Fused Lightning Protection (NFLP) device is also available to further isolate network components from the lightning source. The NFLP contains additional grounding protection and replaceable one amp fast-blow fuses designed to isolate and protect the inside network from larger electrical surges on exposed outside network runs.

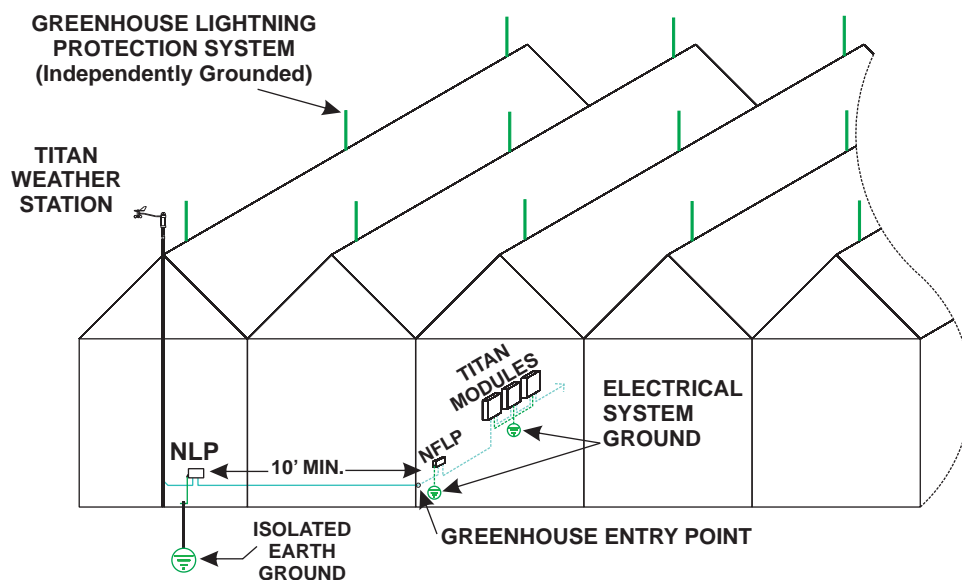
In practice, the normal operating power running through this unit should be limited to half an amp or less. Examples of acceptable power loads include:

- One Weather Station
- or Two I/O Modules
- or One or two Controllers

An NLP device should be installed in conjunction with the NFLP device to reduce the incidence of 'nuisance' fuse blowing during less intense lightning storms. The NFLP is inserted into the network wiring between the NLP (located outside the building) and the first Titan module inside your building (see the diagram below). The NFLP can be safely connected to your building electrical ground system since the fusing limits the amount of energy that can be shunted into the grounding system.

These devices are both designed to augment the existing on-board network surge protection and discharge circuitry on all Titan hardware modules. Data sheets for these new lightning protection devices are available on the Argus Website: www.arguscontrols.com. For more information, please contact us.

Finally, lightning arresters (not sold by Argus) can form an important third layer of protection by intercepting lightning energy at high points around your site, thus providing an area of protection. The grounding system for the lightning arrestors must be kept separate from both your electrical grounds and the NLP grounding point *except* for a single bonding connection (see below).



New Argus Backup and Restore Utilities

New Argus Backup and Restore utilities are available starting with Argus Classic build 66B and Argus Titan build 220.

Argus Backup

This new utility creates complete backup sets of Argus system programs, installers, control data and user files. These 'restore points' can then be used in emergencies to restore Argus programs or data in the event of a PC or hard drive failure. You can back up to any local, removable, external, or mass storage device connected to your PC or any accessible network location.

The backup utility is primarily used to back up the files from the Local Argus Server PC. This is where the master set of all up-to-date Argus files and programs is located. You can also perform backups at Argus Client PCs, although you run the risk of backing up 'older' data if these Clients are not currently synchronized with the Argus Server PC. Still, a backup from any Argus PC is a lot better than nothing should you have a catastrophic failure or lose your Argus Server PC and its associated backups to a theft, flood, or fire.

Backups can be performed manually at any time, or they can be scheduled to run

automatically at daily, weekly, or monthly intervals. Automatic backups are the simplest way to ensure your backed up data is up-to-date. Each backup set is maintained as a dated restore point for future restore operations.

Argus Restore

The backup sets contain everything you need to restore or install Argus files and programs onto any PC. These include:

- Control system settings
- User files, labels, screens on the PC
- Argus related programs (executables)

Argus Restore makes this easy. You can:

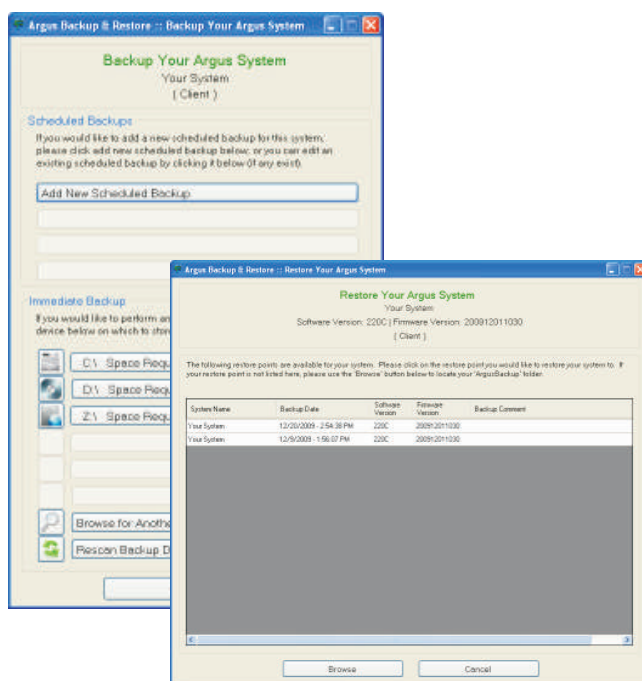
1. Restore your current Argus PC files from a backed up set after a data loss.
2. Quickly transfer and install your Argus program files to another PC without needing the original program installation disk.

Are all of the files generated by the Argus system backed up?

Everything is backed up except for archived data such as the Data Stream files (data recording) and a few other history files. We intentionally bypass these files since they grow over time, and can require huge amounts of disk storage space. This makes backup operations fast and each set is small enough to fit on most removable media such as CD-Rs and USB Flash drives.

Protecting Archived Data

For protecting your archived data, we have implemented another new option that mirrors archival data to another drive, preferably another network location. This simple mirror feature writes your archived data to another drive or network location at the same time the information is written to your Local Argus Server PC. It's an easy way to maintain a duplicate copy of these larger data sets. You should also include these archive files in your normal back-up procedures for your PC if archival data is very important to you. Please contact Argus for more details on these new utilities.



Accessing Your Argus System Using Mobile Devices

You can access your Argus Client or Server PC remotely using your smart phone (Blackberry, iPhone, Windows Mobile Device, etc.). This is accomplished by running a third-party application on your smart phone that takes over control of any PC running the Argus client or server software.

Accessing your Argus Control system in this way can be a very handy way to check alarms, view readings, and make a few settings changes (as well as any other operations you could normally do sitting at an Argus workstation). Keep in mind that the slower speed of the connection and the smaller screen size can make it more difficult to use than direct access on a standard PC. Also, since this is a third party application that takes over control of the user interface of your PC, no one else can use the PC while you are accessing it remotely.

Although there are several applications for accomplishing remote mobile access, the third-party application that Argus currently recommends is called RDM+. This program does not require you to configure your router or firewall and it also allows you to connect to an RDM+ enabled computer from most types of smart phones. The software is reasonably priced, and can be purchased directly from the RDM+ web site. A trial version is also available.

Installation is straightforward:

1. Open a web browser on the target PC and go to <http://www.rdmplus.com/rdm>
2. Click on the type of smart phone that you have (iPhone, Blackberry, etc.)
3. Follow the quick start instructions on the web page in order to install the software on both your computer and your smart phone.

As part of the PC installation process, your PC is automatically assigned a security number that must be entered on the smart phone interface to make the connection.

Once you have connected to the target PC through your smart phone, you have access to all functions on that computer, including access to the Argus software running on that computer.

Please remember that if you require any assistance installing or configuring the RDM+ software, you must contact RDM or your preferred IT support provider. Argus cannot provide support for third-party software applications.

