

# Foster Retires Transformers After Decades Of Service

Foster Transformer

Cincinnati, OH – You never know what to expect when customers call, but three recent telephone calls to Foster Transformer were especially noteworthy. Three customers called to replace their Foster transformers with current models. Nothing unique about that – until you consider the average life span of the products was over 50 years each. Especially impressive is the fact that one of the transformers is still functioning – another was operational but the customer shorted it while cleaning – and the third failed, but only after more than five decades on the job.

An Erie, PA man called to find the current model of the Foster transformer which powered his father's doorbell. While still functional this low voltage Class 2 transformer was getting rather noisy – understandable since the product was built in the 1940's. Not knowing what was causing the noise, the father was understandably anxious and somewhat nervous, concerned the transformer might be a safety hazard. "In the early days of the industry, it was common to dip small transformers in hot wax to provide protection from moisture and dampen the noise created by the reversing magnetic field in the core." said Foster VP Herm Harrison. "Eventually, as in this case, the oil in the wax evaporates, and the core of the transformer can begin to vibrate or "hum". While not harmful, the noise can be irritating. Today, we impregnate the transformers with an epoxy resin which provides superior protection and lasts the life of the transformer.

Another Albuquerque, New Mexico customer called to say that he had accidentally shorted the transformer operating the furnace control in his mobile home. This transformer was originally built in 1967 – and was still operating at the time of the operator error causing this short-circuit. The new model – a Survivor series transformer was designed to withstand operator errors like this one. In fact, these transformers are able to withstand a direct short for at least 15-days, while still operating at design parameters.

One transformer did actually fail – but only after more than 50 years of actuating the furnace which it was originally supplied with back in 1960. Unable to obtain support from his local HVAC contractor, the New Jersey man called and we were able to pull the original design file to verify the specifications and suggest a suitable replacement.

"In the throw-away society that we live in, it was refreshing to see just how long our products operate on a continuous basis. We take pride in the craftsmanship that goes into every Foster Transformer, and these examples of long service life are validation that this attention to detail and workmanship pays off" continued Harrison. It's satisfying to have the resources to support our product decades after it's manufacture. Few companies today can make this claim. We receive calls and

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emails nearly every day asking for information on transformers we built in the 1940's, 50's and 60's. Often the transformers have outlasted the equipment in which they were originally installed and the owner is looking to repurpose them for a new application.

*Foster Transformer has been making electronic transformers, power supplies, and electromagnetic components for 75 years. Their corporate headquarters, Engineering Lab and primary manufacturing facility are located in Cincinnati, OH. The ability to manufacture their own tooling, fixtures and unique production machinery, allows Foster to provide quick turnaround, start-up and support low-to mid volume from the Cincinnati plant. Foster has additional manufacturing capacity available in China to support long run, high volume applications. For more information contact Foster Transformer, 3820 Colerain Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45223, (800) 963-9799, or [info@foster-transformer.com](mailto:info@foster-transformer.com) [1].*

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