

The Okonite Cable Company, originally called the New York Insulated Wire and Vulcanite Company, was established in 1878 to produce rubber insulated electrical cables. In the early 1920s, the decision was made to expand the product line to include paper-insulated cables. The company partnered with Callender's Cable and Construction Company, forming the Okonite-Callender Cable Company in 1924. For this new product, a new plant was needed, and the Paterson Plant was acquired and transformed into a state-of-the-art paper cable manufacturing facility.

The Paterson plant established itself at the forefront of technological developments throughout the 1930s and 1940s. During World War II, the company received several Army-Navy "E" Awards for wartime production. Besides producing electrical cable for the Allies, in 1944, Okonite participated in Operation PLUTO (Pipeline Under the Ocean). This project transported petrol from England to France to support the troops in the months following the D-Day invasion. In 1948, Okonite purchased the assets of Okonite-Callender Cable Company, bringing the Paterson Plant fully under Okonite control.

During its long history, the Paterson Plant has been providing high quality power cables to utility companies throughout the United States. In the early 1960s, the Paterson Plant was greatly expanded and modernized. The plant has continued to upgrade and modernize as needed. Along with the production of paper insulated cables, the Paterson plant houses the company's research and development center and the high voltage test laboratory.

***Paterson, the first plant to pioneer
(Pipe type) paper cables, is now the last plant
in the world to still produce them.***

Loading reels of cable, circa 1950. Courtesy of Okonite.



Paper insulated cable has been produced at the Paterson Plant since 1924.
The Paterson Museum Collection.

