



Contact: Eric Olson  
218-723-3947  
eolson@allete.com

# NEWS

## **Minnesota Power Offers New Online Business Resource Center**

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DULUTH, Minn. – Minnesota Power is sponsoring access to a powerful business information tool through a link on its Web site, available at <http://mnpower.biztoolkit.org>. The new Online Business Resource Center is the result of an exclusive partnership between Minnesota Power and one of the country's most comprehensive business libraries, the St. Paul, Minn.-based James J. Hill Reference Library. The partnership is designed to help business owners access information covering the entire business lifecycle of planning, marketing, growth/sales and ongoing management.

The Online Business Resource Center link connects visitors to the James. J. Hill Reference Library. Minnesota Power commercial customers may register for special services on the site, including a live help desk and discounts on resources that include Power Search, a research tool to access industry-expert information typically reserved for large firms, and access to the Minnesota FactBook Online. The FactBook offers Minnesota-specific information on technology, human resources, environmental matters, economic indicators, directories of Minnesota businesses and associations and more.

A General Access section is also available at no cost to any Internet user. Information available includes in-depth market and industry research and analysis, business planning assistance, downloadable business plans, business calculators and real estate information.

"Our goal is to help existing businesses grow and help new businesses get up and running," said Jennifer Hawkins, Minnesota Power senior economic development analyst. "There are many helpful Internet search engines, but they cover about 20 percent of the Internet and even less of the business Web. The James J. Hill Reference Library, which is dedicated to helping small to medium-sized businesses, will benefit business owners who are busy managing their daily operations."

Minnesota Power's Economic Development Program has worked to create or preserve approximately 5,000 jobs

*Minnesota Power provides electricity in a 26,000 square mile electric service territory in northeastern Minnesota. The utility supplies retail electric service to 138,000 retail customers, wholesale electric service to 16 municipalities, and some of the largest industrial customers in the United States.*

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