

NEWS

Sustainability double-header: Minnesota Power offers new way for customers to go renewable, tops state energy savings goal

Duluth, Minn. – Minnesota Power has introduced a new renewable energy program and exceeded a state energy-savings goal as it continues to help customers meet their sustainability goals and make progress toward a cleaner, lower-carbon future.

With Earth Day just around the corner, customers can choose to power their home or business with more renewable energy when they enroll in Minnesota Power’s Renewable Source program. They also can learn more about how to save energy through the company’s Conservation Improvement Program, which exceeded the state of Minnesota’s 1.5% energy-savings goal in 2018 for the ninth consecutive year.

“Our successful conservation team has long helped homeowners, businesses and communities use energy more wisely, saving them money as well as reducing their carbon emissions and supporting a more sustainable future,” said Frank Frederickson, vice president of customer experience at Minnesota Power. “Our new Renewable Source program is another way we’re innovating and offering choices for customers who want to directly reduce their carbon footprint.”

Renewable Source

Renewable Source joins Minnesota Power’s other renewable energy programs offered to customers, including the Community Solar Garden and SolarSense.

By enrolling in Renewable Source, customers choose to pay a little extra to add more renewable energy to the power grid equal to a percentage of their monthly energy use. The power that customers purchase will be generated at a new wind farm in north-central Iowa where it will flow onto the grid and be mixed with electricity from other renewable and conventional sources. Renewable Source is an easy way for customers to support renewable energy and reduce their carbon footprint with nothing to install or maintain. Although Renewable Source is 100 percent wind now, other sources of renewable energy may be part of the program mix in the future.

“We have significantly transformed our power supply, increasing the renewable content of the energy we supply to customers from 5% in 2005 to about 30% in 2018—well ahead of the state’s goal of 25% by 2025—and are approaching 50% renewable by 2025 through our EnergyForward strategy,” Frederickson said. “However, we know many customers want even more renewable energy today and we’re excited to offer them this choice to meet their individualized needs.”

Visit www.mnpower.com/ProgramsRebates/RenewableSource for more information about how the program works and details on a contest where customers who sign up for Renewable Source are eligible to win one of two \$100 bill credits.

Conservation Improvement Program energy savings

Minnesota Power's Conservation Improvement Program works with business, commercial and residential customers to find specific ways to reduce energy use. Those efforts paid off by saving more than 72,479,000 kilowatt-hours in 2018, enough energy to power about 8,000 homes for a year. The savings also translates to reducing carbon dioxide emissions by more than 56,000 tons, which is comparable to taking more than 11,000 cars off the road for a year.

Total energy saved in 2018 was 2.6% of retail energy sales, well above the state goal of 1.5%. Minnesota Power reported the savings in its annual Conservation Improvement Program report submitted April 1 to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission and the Minnesota Department of Commerce.

Success stories

Minnesota Power's success in saving energy and reducing carbon emissions is directly connected to the success of its customers. Some of those customer experiences are part of the Conservation Improvement Program report submitted to the state and include:

Miller Hill Mall. Projects completed at this Duluth shopping destination include replacement of more than 1,000 outdated metal halide, fluorescent and incandescent fixtures with state-of-the-art LEDs, installation of lighting controls and a switch to low-flow water faucets in restrooms and kitchen sinks. The upgrades are expected to save more than 900,000 kilowatt-hours a year and result in an estimated \$55,000 in annual cost savings.

Goodwill Industries. Minnesota Power worked with Goodwill to improve lighting at its flagship retail store in Duluth. The LED upgrade qualified Goodwill for more than \$24,000 in rebates and is expected to reduce the building's annual electric use by nearly 305,000 kilowatt-hours and save the nonprofit about \$22,000 per year on its utility bills.

Low-income programs. Minnesota Power embarked on a new, more comprehensive approach to serving low-income customers that involved restructuring the assistance programs page on mnpower.com, additional training on the Cold Weather Rule, co-sponsoring the Energy Awareness Expo, partnering with Ruby's Pantry, and sharing an AmeriCorps VISTA member with Ecolibrium3, a Duluth-based nonprofit.

You can read more about customers' experiences at <https://www.mnpower.com/ProgramsRebates/CustomerProfiles>

Find more information about Minnesota Power's conservation programs at <https://www.mnpower.com/ProgramsRebates/PO1>

Minnesota Power provides electric service within a 26,000-square-mile area in Northeastern Minnesota, supporting comfort, security and quality of life for 145,000 customers, 16 municipalities and some of the largest industrial customers in the United States. More information can be found by visiting www.mnpower.com.

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