

NEWS

Sustainable design, electric cars among highlights as Energy Design Conference celebrates 30 years

Duluth, Minn. – Innovations in energy efficiency at home and on the road will be showcased at the 30th annual Energy Design Conference & Expo Feb. 25-26 at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center.

Minnesota Power hosts and facilitates the conference that features two days of educational sessions devoted to energy-efficient and sustainable building design and construction. The accompanying expo in the DECC's Fitzgerald Hall includes more than 30 exhibits of energy-efficient products and services along with a display of electric vehicles.

The Energy Design Conference routinely attracts hundreds of residential and commercial construction professionals, equipment and material suppliers, property managers, homeowners and others interested in energy efficiency, sustainability and renewable energy. It began 30 years ago as a one-day builders conference with 45 attendees and has grown to become the premier conference on energy efficiency and high-performance building in Minnesota.

“Bringing together all of this expertise in sustainable energy design in one place has an effect far beyond the walls of the DECC,” said Frank Frederickson, vice president of Customer Experience at Minnesota Power. “Residential and commercial builders; heating, ventilation and air conditioning professionals; weatherization experts; and other attendees take what they learn here and apply it to homes and businesses across the region, complementing Minnesota Power’s leadership in delivery of renewable energy and dedicated support for customers’ efforts to meet their individual energy saving goals.”

Online registration for the conference closed Feb. 20, but walk-in registration is welcome. The expo and electric vehicle display are free and open to the public from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 25, and from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 26.

Visitors will be able to “kick the tires” on six models of electric vehicles from Audi, Chevrolet, Tesla, Nissan, Mitsubishi and Chrysler. A Zero DS motorcycle also will be on display. To support the growing interest in electric vehicles, Minnesota Power is investing in public charging stations across its service area, including this year’s donation of charging stations to 20 business customers for installation at their locations across the region.

The Energy Design Conference opens with Tuesday’s keynote address by Gord Cooke, a partner with Construction Instruction Inc. and a professional engineer. In a nod to the conference’s 30th anniversary, his presentation is called “Are We There Yet? Thirty Years Along the Path of Better Buildings. What Have We Accomplished? What is Left to Do?”

More information about the conference, including a detailed agenda with session descriptions, is available at www.duluthenergydesign.com.

The 2020 Energy Design Conference is sponsored by Minnesota Power; Superior Water, Light and Power; and the Energy Conservatory. Other partners who joined in the development, planning and implementation of the conference are Ecolibrium 3, Wagner Zaun Architecture, American Institute of Architects of Northern Minnesota, Great River Energy, Clean Energy Resource Teams, Construction Specifications Institute, and Cooperative Light and Power.

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, 15 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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