

Welcome to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual

# Energy Design Concepts

FEBRUARY 17-18, 2026

**Building science education  
focused on the core principles of energy  
efficient building and responsible design.**

Hosted by:



Presented by:



**Duluth Entertainment Convention Center (DECC)**

# 2026 Energy Design Concepts



Welcome to this year's **Energy Design Concepts** event! We're excited to bring together professionals, partners, and innovators who share a passion for shaping the future of energy solutions. Your participation helps strengthen our community of forward-thinkers—people who are not only adapting to change but leading the way toward cleaner, smarter, more resilient energy systems.

We sincerely appreciate your willingness to embrace the new format of the Energy Design Conference. As our industry continues to evolve, so must the way we learn, collaborate, and share knowledge. Your openness to trying something new these past few years allows us to build a more dynamic experience that supports deeper engagement, more meaningful conversations, and richer educational opportunities for everyone involved. **New this year, we're excited to introduce dedicated break-time opportunities to connect with industry vendors.** We hope you enjoy taking a moment to explore the innovative products, tools, and services they offer—and discover how their expertise can help support and enhance the work you do every day.

Looking ahead, we're already planning to expand the agenda in 2027 to offer even more value throughout the event. Next year's vision includes additional course offerings each day, giving attendees greater flexibility to customize their learning paths and dive into a wider range of topics. We're excited to continue growing alongside you and to build an event experience that keeps getting better year after year. Thank you for being here, for your curiosity, and for your commitment to advancing energy design. We hope you enjoy the sessions, connect with new colleagues, and leave feeling inspired by what's possible when we learn together.

## General Conference Information

- We are pleased to offer complimentary wireless service to our attendees:

**Network: EDC2026**  
**Password: duluth2026!**

- If you are seeking Continuing Education Credits (CEUs), **you must be present the entire session in order to receive credit.** Partial credit will not be given.
- Please wear your name tag during the entire event.
- Please be courteous and silence your computer notifications and cell phone during all sessions.



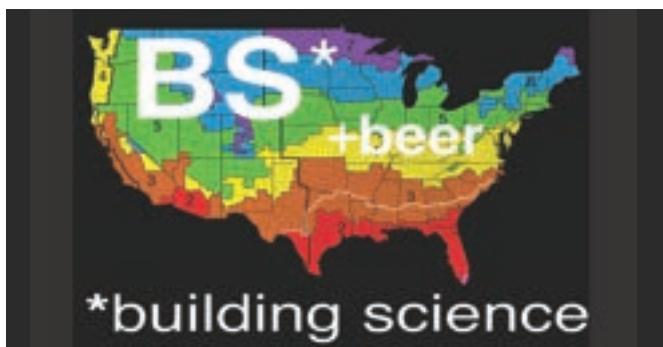
**Be the first to hear about new updates and education events! Sign up for the EDC mailing list here.**





### Tuesday, February 17, 2026, 4:30pm-6:00pm

We invite you to join us for an evening reception after the first day of training. This will be a great opportunity to network with fellow attendees, share insights, and unwind after a day of learning. We look forward to seeing you at the reception in the 3rd floor foyer of Harborside Ballroom.



#### Upcoming BS + Beer Events

BS + (building science and beer) is a grassroots, community driven group who meets once a month to discuss various topics in building and building science. If buildings and building science are of interest to you we invite you to join us at our next meeting! If you'd like to be added to the email list please email [ferncustomcarpentry@gmail.com](mailto:ferncustomcarpentry@gmail.com).

Meetings are hosted in the Skyroom (upstairs) at *At Sara's Table* on Chester Creek (1902 E 8th St Duluth, MN 55812).

#### Save these dates in 2026!

- |                |               |                 |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| March 12, 2026 | May 21, 2026  | July 9, 2026    |
| April 9, 2026  | June 11, 2026 | August 13, 2026 |



**2026 HIGH PERFORMANCE HOME BUILDER SUMMIT**  
September 16 - 18 | Saint Paul, Minnesota  
*RESILIENT HOMES, ENDURING COMMUNITIES*

IN PERSON REGISTRATION

\$400 OFF	Member Rate <b>\$695</b>	Regular Rate <del><b>\$1095</b></del>
	BRING A FIRST TIME SUMMIT ATTENDEE FOR \$500	

COMMUNITY
 COLLABORATION
 CONNECTION
 EDUCATION

At the EEBA High Performance Home Builder Summit, we bring together the best in residential construction — high-performance builders committed to sustainability and excellence, alongside the industry's most innovative manufacturers showcasing products and technologies designed to improve the performance, comfort, and efficiency of homes.

Powered by Xcel Energy

<https://summit2026.eeba.org/>  
<https://eeba.org/membership>

6:30am	Registration/Coffee/ Light Refreshments
7:00am	<i>Mastering Contracts: Your Key to Contractor Success*</i>
8:30am	<i>Houses that Work*</i>
10:00-10:15am	Morning Break*
12:00-1:00pm	Lunch Break
2:30-2:45pm	Afternoon Break*
4:30pm	<i>Houses that Work Course Ends*</i>
4:30-6:00pm	Evening Social & Networking

*\*Exact presentation and break times are  
subject to change*

## Mastering Contracts: Your Key to Contractor Success

7:00-8:15am\*

**Presented by Bill Gschwind, Minnesota  
Construction Law Services**

### Course description:

It's called contracting for a reason: Nearly every part of the project is governed by a contract. As a licensed contractor, you're required to have a written contract with your customer. For most of you, the specialty trades are performed under a contract. For many of you, most if not all of the trades are performed by folks who are not employees; those relationships need to be governed by a contract. Most general contractors in the residential area spend less time building and more time coordinating performance under a contract. This course pulls back the curtain of the contract to take the mystery out. Rather than some mysterious legal document meant to protect you, you'll discover that every contract, just like the projects it governs, has similar formula – the step-by-step set of instructions for building a successful project. This course breaks down the parts of a contract and explores the importance of using contracts. This course helps attendees understand the benefits and protections contracts provide and will explain the customization options for specific contracts.

### Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, attendees will understand:

- Why the contract is more important for a successful project than the plans and specs.
- The magic words every well-drafted contract contains and how to use them.
- The magic words required in a customer contract for a licensed contractor in Minnesota.
- The benefits, and dangers, of a “one-size-fits-all” contract template.
- Which contract templates you should have in your library and when to use them.

## Houses that Work

8:30am-4:30pm\*

**Presented by Aaron Smith, EEBA**

### **Course description:**

In this full day session, learn how complex changes in home design, building materials, mechanical systems, appliances, code compliance and consumer lifestyles and expectations make every builder, supplier, and trade contractor's job more demanding. This design workshop will cover the fundamentals of building science and how it is applied to create many different types of high-performance walls and assemblies. The session will address critical home performance elements that exist as a system and are part of energy efficient homes. The fundamentals of building science – air, heat, and moisture flow – will be outlined and applied to help participants make better choices with respect to construction materials and methods. Participants will also learn important information about indoor air quality and cost-effective strategies to be able to offer healthier indoor environments.

At the end of the session, attendees will have a thorough understanding of how to build better attics, walls, and foundations and how to choose HVAC systems that integrate properly into their homes. This session will also cover how building science principles improve the marketing position for building professionals, providing case studies of builders who have changed their building processes and gained return through communicating the value of high-performance homes.

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Learn the elements of high-performance homes and how they help respond to code compliance and the many changes in the residential construction industry, as well as consumer expectations.
- Understand the fundamentals of air, heat and moisture flow and see how they can be applied to make better material and methods decisions.
- Apply the building science to attics, walls, windows, foundations, and HVAC decisions to create high performance homes.
- Identify the building process changes needed to cost-effectively implement high performance homes.

6:30am	Registration/Coffee/ Light Refreshments
7:00am	<i>Future-Proof Fenestration: High Performance Fiberglass Windows &amp; Doors*</i>
8:30am	<i>Statutory Warranty: Fact &amp; Fiction*</i>
9:30am	<i>Retrofits that Work*</i>
TBD	<b>Morning Break*</b>
12:00-1:00pm	<b>Lunch Break</b>
2:30-2:45pm	<b>Afternoon Break*</b>
4:30pm	<i>Retrofits that Work Course Ends*</i>

*\*Exact presentation and break times  
are subject to change*

## Future-Proof Fenestration: High Performance Fiberglass Windows & Doors

7:00am-8:15am\*

**Paul Kellner, Heritage Window & Door**

### Course description:

This educational session provides a comprehensive technical update on current innovations in fiberglass window and door systems, with emphasis on meeting the evolving needs of thermal performance. Delivered by Paul Kellner, with over 30 years' experience in the industry, he explores how fiberglass assemblies support higher thermal performance standards, improved occupant well-being, and longterm durability.

Participants will examine exciting advances in glazing performance, including Thin Glass Quads (up to R-15) and Vacuum Insulated Glass (VIG up to R-21), and explain how these emerging technologies contribute to healthier, more comfortable interior environments—meeting the growing energy code demands with ease.

### Learning Objectives:

- Weigh the pros/cons of various framing materials with a focus on fiberglass.
- Recognize the trade-offs between U-values, solar heat gain coefficients, and visible light, particularly in a cold climate region.
- Note modern day materials including Thin Glass Quads and Vacuum Insulated Glazing.
- Note the appropriate uses of different Low E types depending on building orientation and other factors.
- Consider features for an aging population, such as extended locks and levers for windows and doors.
- Weigh the benefits of casements and awnings vs. tilt n' turns in a North American marketplace.

# Statutory Warranty: Fact & Fiction

8:30am-9:30am\*

**Presented by Bill Gschwind, Minnesota  
Construction Law Services**

## **Course description:**

This course provides a comprehensive overview of Minnesota's 327A Statutory Warranty—a legal requirement for all licensed contractors engaged in new home construction or significant remodeling. Participants will gain insight into the origins and intent of the warranty, its key components, and the types of defects it covers. Emphasis is placed on the nuanced responsibilities of general contractors versus subcontractors, including documentation, insurance obligations, and liability timelines. The course also explores common warranty exclusions, such as natural wear and third-party alterations, as well as legal interpretations that extend the one-year workmanship warranty into long-term accountability. Attendees will review the step-by-step claims process, the significance of timely action, and the role of neutral conferences in dispute resolution. Finally, the session outlines the limited circumstances under which warranty terms can be waived or altered, reinforcing the legal and procedural complexity of this important Minnesota statute.

## **Learning Objectives:**

- Explain the scope and purpose of Minnesota's 327A Statutory Warranty, including its mandated application for new homes and remodeling projects.
- Identify the responsibilities of general contractors and subcontractors under the 327A Warranty, and understand how insurance plays a role in warranty coverage.
- Interpret the timeline and procedures involved in the 327A claims process, including inspection, repair plans, and dispute resolution methods.
- Distinguish between warranty coverage and the specific exclusions listed in the statute, with examples such as wear and tear, improper maintenance, or acts of God.
- Evaluate the legal flexibility of the 327A Warranty, including how and under what conditions the warranty terms may be modified or waived.

## Retrofits that Work

9:30am-4:30pm\*

Presented by Aaron Smith, EEBA

### Course description:

In this full day session, learn how renovating homes to near zero energy can benefit from using building science-based design priorities through:

- selecting building materials and enclosure options
- considering new mechanical systems
- assessing the impact of renewables like PV or storage

This design workshop will cover the fundamentals of building science and how it is applied to assess durable and efficient enclosure upgrades and renovations. This session will also explore efficient, reliable and resilient HVAC selection procedures and equipment selection and testing.

The fundamentals of building science - air, heat, and moisture flow – OR house-as-a-system – will be outlined and applied to help participants make better choices with respect to construction materials and methods. Participants will also learn important information about indoor air quality and cost-effective strategies to be able to offer healthier indoor environments.

Attendees will gain a thorough understanding of how to approach deep energy or near zero renovations, while ensuring the outcome of a durable, safe, efficient and comfortable residence.

### Learning Objectives:

- Learn the elements of high-performance renovations and how to apply building science to the decision matrix.
- Apply the building science to renovating attics, walls, windows, foundations, and HVAC decisions to create high performance EXISTING, near-zero homes.
- Assess the impact of adding renewables and/or battery storage.
- Identify the building process changes needed to cost-effectively implement high performance renovations.

# 2026 Vendors



Industry-leading air sealing technology. Improving the lives of people world-wide by delivering comfort, healthy air, and substantial energy savings.



The Arrowhead Builders Association, "ABA"; is a three level organization working in conjunction with Builders Association of Minnesota (BAM) and National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) whose mission is Supporting the Building Industry through Education and Advocacy. Our Vision is to become a primary resource for home builders, connecting them to quality contactors to fulfill their property needs.



Ecolibrium3 is a community-based organization in the Lincoln Park neighborhood of Duluth whose mission is to lead and inspire change toward an equitable and sustainable future. They accomplish this through a variety of programs, including their energy efficiency program, providing home energy assessments and home energy retrofits to eligible households. They also train the next generation of home energy professionals through their Energy Training Corps program, a robust paid training opportunity for early career development in the energy sector.

# 2026 Vendors



The Focus on Energy (FOE) is the statewide energy program in Wisconsin. SWLP is a participating utility in the program to utilize all of the services and capture energy efficiency incentives as projects take place.



**EcoSmart**<sup>™</sup>  
CONSTRUCTION STUD

The EcoSmart Stud is the replacement for the solid 2x6 exterior wall stud, the known weak point in insulation envelope. The EcoSmart 2x6 & 2x8 studs have gaps which reduce thermal bridging by allowing insulation to fill in those gaps. The EcoSmart Stud is the base to build a simple, resilient, highly efficient, composite wall system at a lower cost than using Continuous Insulation that meets and exceeds the 2021 National Energy code. Carbon emission savings start at the mill, continue through the supply chain and culminate in the lifetime of the structures built. The EcoSmart Stud speeds up the construction process with predrilled slots to run electrical wires, gas lines, water supply line (zones 1-3).



**Heritage**  
Window & Door

Since 1991, Heritage Window & Door has been providing exceptional products, service and craftsmanship. Architects, builders, and homeowners admire the work we do for commercial and residential structures, and they appreciate the value and service we offer. From high-performance windows and doors to distinctive hardware, we are your knowledgeable source for exceptional building materials. Visit our showroom to browse our displays and consult with our knowledgeable staff.



Carlisle Spray Foam Insulation (CSFI) is your fully integrated solution of people, products, and building science. Part of Carlisle Weatherproofing Technologies, CSFI is backed by the technology resources – and grounded on the corporate stability – of a century-old icon in the building ecosystem: Carlisle Companies Incorporated. Our SealTite™ PRO products possess top-performing formulations, with the pinnacle of thermal protection in both residential and commercial applications.



AN ALLETE COMPANY

Minnesota Power provides reliable, affordable energy to northeastern Minnesota, serving a diverse customer base that includes residential households, small businesses, large industrial customers, and community partners. Minnesota Power offers a wide range of programs designed to support energy efficiency, electrification, and customer comfort. These programs are available to homeowners, builders, contractors, and commercial customers. Minnesota Power provides rebates, incentives, and technical support to help customers improve efficiency and lower energy costs.

## Panasonic

As part of our mission to promote clean indoor air and healthy home-building, Panasonic ventilation fans are built for power and the ability to move air more effectively. We engineer our fans to perform beyond the minimum 0.1" and 0.25" static pressure benchmarks. Panasonic ECM-motored models are the only HVI-certified ventilation fans on the market that overcome static pressure at the True Flow rating 0.375" level, more common on typical installations.



WaterFurnace is the most recognized and respected name in geothermal (ground source heat pumps). That's because we lead the industry in design, efficiency, reliability and warranty protection for over 35 years. Our engineers and technicians work to create and build quality geothermal products that are extensively tested to ensure the highest quality. An industry leader and innovator in geothermal technology - WaterFurnace isn't just about comfort. It's about energy independence, grid resilience, and good jobs.

## Aaron Smith



Aaron Smith is the CEO of the Energy and Environmental Building Alliance (EEBA) which represents a community of over 50,000 builders and their stakeholders across North America that are truly the early adopters and innovators in driving sustainable transformation of the homebuilding industry.

Aaron has over 25 years of experience in home construction, building products, sustainability and non-profit board leadership. He has worked for companies including Kohler, Uponor and ASSA ABLOY as well as startups in Silicon Valley and his own building and remodeling company. Aaron previously served on non-profit Boards for Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center, Health Product Declaration Collaborative (HPDC), CT Sustainable Business Council, and co-founded the CT Collaborative - Living Building Challenge.

Aaron completed his undergraduate studies at West Point and St. Cloud State University and is a 2016 graduate of the Yale University MBA program with a focus on Sustainability. He loves green building and sustainability as well as hockey, hiking, skiing, gardening and spending time with his wife, Jennifer, 3 boys and 4 cats and chickens at their home in Minneapolis.



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**Special thanks to:** Tira Aanonsen, Nancy Bakeman, Naomi Christenson, Martin Dean, DECC Staff, Rachel Good, Bill Gshwind, Suzanne Harmelink, Alyssa Harries, Trevor Hofkes, Paul Kellner, Lori Melton, Shawn McLaughlin, Aaron Schutjer, Aaron Smith, Jon Sullivan, Mary Sullivan, 2026 Vendor participants, Programs & Services team, and Office Services team at Minnesota Power.

# Bill Gschwind



Bill Gschwind is the founder of Minnesota Construction Law Services and currently serves as the Principal Attorney. Bill attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison for undergrad then went on to graduate from the University of St. Thomas with an MBA while working in sales management. Later, Bill opened a general rental equipment store and bought a construction equipment rental franchise. After a successful 25-year career, Bill graduated from William Mitchell College of Law, passed the Minnesota Bar in 2010, and two years later opened Minnesota Construction Law Services.

Bill's determination lays the foundation of Minnesota Construction Law Services' dedication to not only build a successful construction law firm but to become a valued business partner for clients. His vast experience with small businesses allows Bill to advise clients on business operations that go beyond just the law. Bill listens to your goals and what you define as success then he creates a plan to get you there.

Bill's dissatisfaction with the way the legal system works for business owners motivated him to not just seek out a better option, but to create the best option. An option that redefines the preconception of 'lawyer' to be someone who treats you like a partner.

# Paul Kellner



Paul Kellner is the owner of Heritage Window and Door and a long-time advocate for high-performance building practices. His passion for energy-efficient design began in 1980 when he constructed a passive solar home for his family—a project that sparked a lifelong dedication to advancing building durability and energy performance.

Over the decades, Paul has become a trusted expert in identifying and supplying fenestration products that meet or exceed energy requirements for some of the coldest regions in the lower 48 states. His credentials span multiple professional organizations, and his project experience includes commercial, residential, and historic preservation work.

Paul's commitment to quality, performance, and innovation continues to guide Heritage Window and Door's mission to deliver exceptional building solutions in challenging climates.

# 2026 Energy Design Concepts

At the end of the session, you must sign the sign-in sheet. This is how we document attendance at sessions so make sure to sign in! Continuing Education Credits (CEUs) will be reported to each accrediting organization based on session attendance and CEU information provided by the attendee during registration. If you indicated on the registration form you need credits for BPI, MN DLI, and/or WI DSPS (and you provided a valid ID number), the CEUs will be submitted on your behalf. Attendees seeking credits for NARI, RESNET, and other credits should self-report.

## Continuing Education Credits Instructions

- Refer to the table on the next page to determine the types of CEUs offered for each session.
- Note, partial credit cannot be given; you must attend the full session to receive credits.
- Sign the sign-in sheet at the end of the session to record attendance for CEUs.
- CEUs for Houses that Work and Retrofits that Work Program will be facilitated by EEBA. BPI CEUs and CEUs for other event sessions will be facilitated by Slipstream.
- Your attendance will be reported to the MN Department of Labor and Industry, WI Department of Safety and Professional Services, and Building Performance Institute based on the information provided during registration. Attendees seeking credits for NARI, RESNET and other credits should self-report.
- Check the box on the CEU sign-in sheet if you'd like to receive a course completion certificate.
- For NARI and RESNET credits, you will be sent a certificate that you can use to self-report.

Course completion certificates will be emailed within a month to each attendee based on information provided during registration and the sign-in sheet for each session attended. A course completion certificate is your proof of course attendance. Please keep a copy of each course completion certificate for your records.

Please direct any questions about CEUs to:

### **Crystal Pelkey**

cpelkey@mnpower.com | 218.355.3748

Minnesota Power | www.mnpower.com

**Tuesday, February 17, 2026**

<b>Mastering Contracts: Your Key to Contractor Success</b> 7:00am - 8:15am	<b>DLI</b>	<b>1 credit Bldg Official</b> <b>1 credit Business Mgmt</b>
<b>Houses that Work</b> 8:30am - 4:30pm	<b>BPI</b>	<b>6 credits</b>
	<b>DLI</b>	<b>3 credits - Residential Energy</b> <b>3 credits - Other</b>
	<b>DSPS</b>	<b>5.5 - Dwelling Contractor Qualifier Certification</b>
	<b>NARI</b>	<b>5.5 credits</b>
	<b>RESNET</b>	<b>5 credits</b>

**Wednesday, February 18, 2026**

<b>Future-Proof Fenestration: High Performance Fiberglass Windows &amp; Doors</b> 7:00am - 8:15am		<b>No credits for this course</b>
<b>The Statutory Warranty: Facts &amp; Fiction</b> 8:30am - 9:30am	<b>DLI</b>	<b>1 credit Bldg Official</b> <b>1 credit Business Mgmt</b>
<b>Retrofits that Work</b> 9:30am - 4:30pm	<b>BPI</b>	<b>6 credits</b>
	<b>DLI</b>	<b>3 credits - Residential Energy</b> <b>3 credits - Other</b>
	<b>DSPS</b>	<b>6 - Dwelling Contractor Qualifier Certification</b>
	<b>NARI</b>	<b>6 credits</b>
	<b>RESNET</b>	<b>6 credits</b>

**BPI** = Building Performance Institute  
**DLI** = Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry  
**DSPS** = Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services

**NARI** = National Association of the Remodeling Industry  
**RESNET** = Residential Energy Services Network

**Thank you for attending the  
3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Energy Design Concepts**



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**ENERGY DESIGN  
CONCEPTS**

Your feedback is  
welcome. Scan this QR  
code for a brief survey.

