

Businesses demonstrating the Power of One®—with effective energy choices

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Black Woods Group Controller Sean Stepan, President of Operations Julie Thoreson and Vice President of Operations Cullen Flaherty worked with Minnesota Power to incorporate energy efficiency into the new Tavern on the Hill.

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*Tanuj Gulati
Energy Insight, Inc.*

Tastefully Designed and Energy Efficient

College students returning to Duluth this fall might be surprised by the transformation underway along Woodland Avenue. New restaurants and retail businesses continue to open their doors in BlueStone Commons, an upscale, mixed-use development on the site of the former Woodland Middle School.

Tavern on the Hill is one of the latest businesses to open there, within easy walking distance of both the University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD) and the College of St. Scholastica. The locally owned restaurant and pub is an attractive addition to the college district and surrounding neighborhoods with its striking exterior and ample outdoor deck. It features casual dining with a menu that ranges from burgers and sandwiches to sushi and vegetarian favorites.

While great attention went into the building’s appearance and atmosphere, its owner, the Black Woods Group (formerly New London Corp.), also wanted Tavern on the Hill to be a model of energy efficiency. Company officials contacted Minnesota Power’s **Power of One® Business** commercial energy conservation team very early in the design process to identify choices that would save energy, lower costs and minimize the facility’s carbon footprint.

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*Cullen Flaherty, Vice President of Operations
Black Woods Group*

“(Minnesota Power) was one of my first calls,” said Cullen Flaherty, vice president of operations for the Black Woods Group, which also owns and operates Black Woods restaurants, Black Water Lounge, Greysolon Ballroom by Black Woods and the Proctor Banquet Center. “I trust their expertise in energy efficiency and wanted them on board.”



Left: The new restaurant is part of BlueStone Commons. Right Top: LED lighting and a high performance ventilation system create a positive work environment for the kitchen crew. Right Bottom: Vice President of Operations Cullen Flaherty and President of Operations Julie Thoreson in the restaurant, where every LED light can be individually controlled.



Top Row: The restaurant's mechanical systems are designed for energy efficiency. Bottom Row: Tanuj Gulati of Energy Insight, Inc. checks out the controls for the kitchen ventilation system. The exhaust system over the stoves have heat and smoke detectors and run only when needed.

That confidence stems from years of working with the utility's energy conservation experts, including Craig Kedrowski of Minnesota Power and Tanuj Gulati of Energy Insight, Inc. Together they have helped the corporation benchmark the energy performance of its restaurants and access rebate incentives for numerous energy conservation improvements.

"Tavern on the Hill will be our most energy-efficient building," Flaherty said, noting that it is the company's first new construction since Black Woods on the Lake opened in 1997. "Technology has changed dramatically, and energy improvements that we have not been able to incorporate into our other restaurants made sense here as we started from scratch."

Some of the key energy conservation features incorporated into the new facility based on Minnesota Power's recommendations include:

- » An icemaker with a rooftop compressor that gets free natural cooling for much of the year;
- » Coolers and freezers with energy-efficient electronically commutated motors;
- » Light emitting diode (LED) exterior signs instead of neon;
- » LED interior fixtures with computerized controls throughout the building;
- » Rooftop HVAC units with thermostats that can be controlled remotely on an iPad or laptop;
- » Full condensing boilers with three-speed ECM pumps; and
- » Exhaust controls with heat and smoke detectors so exhaust fans only run when needed.

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Tavern on the Hill's location near two college campuses made energy efficiency an even higher priority. Both UMD and the College of St. Scholastica are extremely committed to energy and resource efficiency. Both schools partner with Minnesota Power for design assistance, technical support and rebate incentives on their campus building projects.

"There are a lot of college students and faculty members living near the restaurant, and Tavern on the Hill's owners wanted to set an example as a responsible local business that cares about the environment and the local community," said Tanuj Gulati. "They went over and above most new construction in terms of energy efficiency."

"We want to be as ecofriendly as we can, across the board," Flaherty said, citing water conservation and recycling as other examples. "In a way, we are an extension of what is happening on these neighboring college campuses."

Minnesota Power stresses the importance of contacting its **Power of One® Business** commercial energy conservation program early in a building process.

"It is exciting to work with owners like the Black Woods Group that are 100 percent committed," said Craig Kedrowski. "Starting with a clean slate and building toward energy efficiency is the best way to save energy and maximize available rebates. The new restaurant is aesthetically pleasing, energy efficient and will have lower maintenance costs over time. What a great opportunity to design these benefits in on the front end."

For more information:

Take the first steps toward managing energy use and costs at your business. Learn more about Power of One®, Minnesota Power's commercial, agricultural and industrial energy conservation program, and fill out your free online pre-application form.

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