

One Business

Energy Conservation Program



Kolar Toyota

Winter 2018

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David Solon, General Manager
Kolar Toyota

Kolar Toyota Takes the High Road on Energy Efficiency

People who are shopping for a new car, truck or sport utility vehicle often consider gas mileage a very important factor. That interest drives many shoppers to visit Kolar Toyota in Hermantown, Minn., in search of a hybrid Prius, Camry, RAV4 or one of many other fuel-efficient vehicles. What shoppers might not realize, however, is that Kolar Toyota’s facility itself is miles ahead of most auto dealerships in energy performance.

The recently expanded and remodeled building features 100 percent energy-efficient LED lighting, inside and out, plus newly installed office air conditioning units with a seasonal energy efficiency ratio (SEER) that exceeds Minnesota state code.

General Manager David Solon gets much of the credit for advancing a culture of energy efficiency at Kolar Toyota as well as other nearby dealerships in the Kolar Auto World family. For more than a decade, he has worked with Minnesota Power’s Power of One® Business conservation improvement program (CIP) to identify and complete energy-saving facility upgrades.

“Dave is one of our biggest and earliest adopters,” said Craig Kedrowski, energy efficiency analyst-lead, Minnesota

Power. “He always looks at the whole building and how energy-efficient choices, such as the newest LED lighting technology, will enhance business while reducing energy usage and lowering costs.”

Kolar Toyota’s expansion and remodeling project added more than 10,000 square feet to the facility. It expanded the dealership’s showroom floor and created an all-new service department, service entry and customer lounge. Minnesota Power’s CIP consultants were involved well before ground was broken. They worked closely with architects in the design phase to analyze the energy and cost-saving implications of everything from heating, ventilation and air conditioning equipment to lighting systems.

Lighting is critical in the auto business so shoppers see vehicle colors and features in a flattering way and service personnel can do their auto repair and maintenance work safely and accurately. Recent advances in LED lighting

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Craig Kedrowski, Energy Efficiency Analyst-Lead
Minnesota Power



(left to right) Minnesota Power Energy Efficiency Analyst Craig Kedrowski, Kolar Toyota General Manager David Solon and Minnesota Power CIP Consultant Tanuj Gulati have built a strong relationship over a decade of collaborating on energy efficiency projects.

made it the right choice for Kolar Toyota's project—and Minnesota Power's CIP team helped company officials sort through their options. The process involved testing a range of LED lighting fixtures and bulbs in different parts of the building.

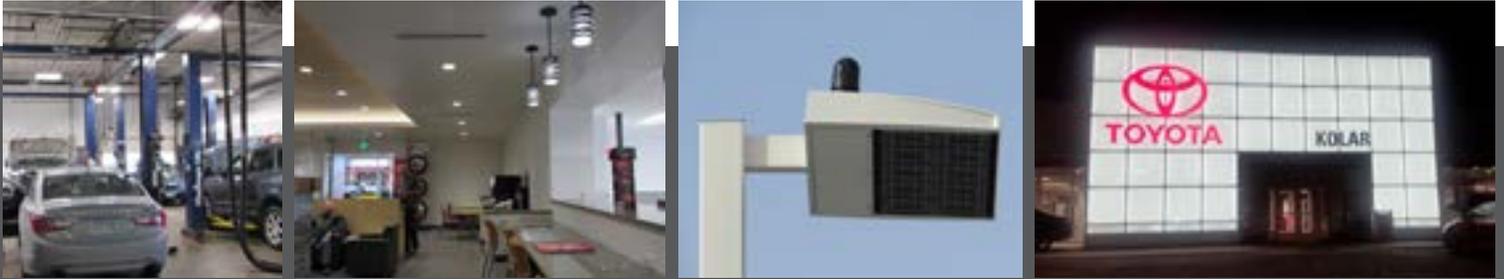
"This was very helpful in making decisions," Solon said. "For example, we ran three different samples in the service department to determine which made the service personnel and mechanics happy, then installed the ones they chose."

Outdoor lighting and signage also was upgraded to LED. Pole lights in the auto lot now have occupancy sensors and programmable dimming controls for even greater efficiency and improved security. They soon will be tied into a system that includes similar LED lights and lighting controls at nearby Kolar Hyundai and Kolar Chevrolet Buick GMC Cadillac, allowing Kolar to program and control the lot lights at all three sites from one location. Minnesota Power paid for part of the outdoor lighting control system as a CIP research project.

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pointing out that rebates influence decisions, but energy and cost savings are the real long-term benefits of working with Minnesota Power. "We added over 10,000 square feet, so we have a much larger facility with more lights, and our power bill has gone down!"



From left: Kolar Toyota tested multiple samples before deciding on LED fixtures for its service department. Attractive LED light fixtures brighten the customer lounge. Nodes on exterior LED lights allow Kolar to program and control them remotely by computer. Bright LED lighting and signage improves Kolar Toyota's visibility.

Altogether, the LED lighting and a high performance heat pump installed at Kolar Toyota during its expansion and renovation will help the company avoid more than 350,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity per year and about 70 kilowatts of monthly demand. The choices qualified the company for around \$20,000 in rebates from Minnesota Power. In addition Kolar will save \$25,000 in cost savings.

"Minnesota Power is a great resource, providing design consultation, sample fixtures and rebates so we don't make mistakes—we do projects right the first time," said Solon,

"Customer buy-in is important," Kedrowski said. "Ultimately, it comes down to providing options that help commercial customers like Kolar Toyota get what is best for them."



For more information:

Take the first step toward managing energy use and costs at your business. Fill out our free online pre-application at mnpower.com/BusinessPreApp

Learn more about Power of One® Business, Minnesota Power's commercial, agricultural and industrial energy conservation program, by calling **218-355-2909** or visiting mnpower.com/OneBusiness

(left to right) Craig Kedrowski, Minnesota Power; David Solon, Kolar Toyota; Tanuj Gulati, Energy Insight Inc.