

PowerGrant Profiles

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Whole Foods Co-op: Energy Savings in Store for Duluth's First LEED® Building



PowerGrant Contact Information

For more information,
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Photos courtesy of LHB and Jeff Frey & Associates

Energy-efficient lighting and refrigeration systems helped Whole Foods Co-op qualify for more than \$11,000 in PowerGrant rebates and achieve LEED® certification.

Members of the Whole Foods Co-op in Duluth make environmental choices every day by the products they buy and the foods they eat. It was only natural that the consumer-owned cooperative would take the same approach when expanding and relocating its retail store and deli. In fact, the organization raised sustainability to a whole new level, becoming the first building in Duluth and the first retail space in Minnesota to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.

"We set very high environmental goals for this project," said Sharon Murphy, general manager. "It was important to create a healthy, resource-efficient environment for our members and staff."

The LEED® Green Building Rating System provided a detailed framework for the co-op and its design team from LHB to assess building performance and meet sustainability goals. Its integrated "whole building"

approach emphasizes state-of-the-art strategies for sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality.

"It is very significant for an organization to commit to the challenge and cost of achieving LEED® certification because the metrics are extremely high," said James Brew, LEED® AP, an LHB architect and building performance specialist.

One of the first decisions Whole Foods Co-op made was to renovate an existing building rather than to construct a new one. The chosen facility, which formerly housed a restaurant, was gutted and retrofitted with high performance, resource-efficient plumbing, wiring, lighting, and heating, ventilation and cooling (HVAC) systems.

Minnesota Power worked with co-op staff and project designers to identify energy-saving technologies that

"Energizing Our Region" through Conservation Improvement

Minnesota Power's Conservation Improvement Program (CIP) works with local leaders, businesses, community groups, other energy providers and government entities to help customers reap the economic and environmental benefits of sustainable energy savings. Minnesota Power and its partners accomplish this through research, education, evaluation and direct impact initiatives.

Find out how you could get a PowerGrant

Minnesota Power awards grants to commercial/industrial customers who use innovative technologies, improve manufacturing processes, undertake renewable electric energy projects, or who need project design assistance. PowerGrant awards are available for a wide variety of projects employing diverse technologies.

Here are some examples of activities or products that could qualify for MP funding under the PowerGrant Program:

- New electro-technologies that lower energy costs per unit of production in a manufacturing process
- Innovative technologies that are new and underutilized in our regional marketplace
- Inclusion of energy-efficient options in the design phase of a project

Maximum annual grants are determined by a customer's average billing demand:

<i>Customer Demand</i>	<i>Maximum Rebate</i>
0 to 100 kW	\$10,000
101 to 300 kW	\$25,000
Over 300 kW	\$50,000

Customers may submit multiple grant requests.

Other MP Products and Services

In addition to PowerGrants, MP CIP offers commercial and industrial customers other energy efficiency products and services. These include energy audits, rebates, dual fuel, storage/off-peak services, outdoor and area lighting and economic development assistance.



A grid-connected solar photovoltaic system generates a portion of the store's energy. An LED screen inside Whole Foods Co-op displays solar energy data.

Renewable energy is a powerful feature...

would maximize utility rebates and grants. Installing energy-efficient fluorescent lighting, lighting control systems, high performance air conditioning, an economizer, refrigerator cases with temperature controls and electronically commutated motor (ECM) fans, and an energy management system qualified Whole Foods Co-op for \$11,359 in PowerGrant rebates. These technologies will save the co-op an estimated 220,090 kWh per year and reduce electric demand by 52.3 kW over conventional equipment—an annual cost savings of \$12,642.

“This was a very expensive project, and the rebates were welcome,” Murphy said. She added that Minnesota Power's support, along with state renewable energy

rebates, enabled the co-op to install a grid-connected solar photovoltaic system that generates a portion of the electricity needed to run the facility. Minnesota Power provided additional funding for a sophisticated monitoring system that streams current data from the solar panels and displays it on an LED screen inside the store.

“It takes a lot of energy to run a grocery business, and we wanted to give something back,” Murphy said. Whole Foods Co-op also is a Gold Level Partner in Minnesota Power's WindSense program, which purchases wind-generated power for the Northland. “We appreciate that Minnesota Power supports conservation and renewable energy.”