
Long Prairie-Grey Eagle High School

Long Prairie-Grey Eagle students reap the benefits of Learn & Earn

Regional Account Manager Mary Bindewald and the \$2,700 check she brought were welcomed recently by Long Prairie-Grey Eagle High School students who participated in the Minnesota Power-sponsored Learn & Earn program.

The program features school-and community- based projects to promote energy-efficient lighting. It also raises students' and residents' awareness of the environmental and economic benefits of replacing incandescent light bulbs, lamps and fixtures with ENERGY STAR®-qualifying compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs, lighting fixtures and lamps. Schools can earn between \$1 and \$5 per qualifying product sold (up to a total of \$5,000) at participating retailers to support school learning programs and purchase school equipment.



From left: Jennifer Harvey, Vicky Herkenhoff of Stearns Electric Association, Victoria Peterson, Mary Bindewald, Ashley Crowe, Greg Hulinsky, and teacher and FFA advisor Keith Olander.

MP's project partners for this Learn & Earn event were Stearns Electric Association, Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative, Long Prairie Ace Hardware and Long Prairie Fleet Supply.

At an award ceremony at the school, Bindewald presented students with the check for money they earned by promoting energy efficiency and a special sale featuring discounted prices on ENERGY STAR® lighting products, thanks to participation by Long Prairie Ace Hardware and Long Prairie Fleet Supply. They also distributed coupons for discounts on the products. The sale resulted in the purchase of more than 2,000 CFL bulbs, including globe, three-way and dusk-to-dawn models, and more than 100 lamps and fixtures. Proceeds from the event will benefit the school's Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter.

By purchasing energy-efficient products, residents saved 178,448 kWh—enough energy to power 18 homes for a year, which translates into: an environmental impact of taking 29 cars off the road and averting the release of 393,000 tons of carbon; and savings of \$60,000 over the products' lifetimes.

Through the program's classroom component, students enjoyed hands-on experiments using watt meters to measure various products' energy performance. They also



conducted research and developed strategies to share their energy knowledge with fellow students, family members and the community.

“It was very successful and a real win-win-win event,” Bindewald said. “MP wins by increasing energy conservation and promoting new technology. Our local hardware stores win because their customers purchased these products—and the stores also helped promote new lighting technology. The students win because Learn & Earn provides an educational opportunity, as well as the chance to earn funds to support school programs and projects. And there’s a fourth win, too: The community supports its local vendors while supporting their school and learning about energy efficiency from these students.”

