

Building your business  
on energy efficiency



# Building Up

February 2009



At Minnesota Power, we get a lot of inquiries from customers looking for ways to improve the energy performance of their homes. Recently, a high percentage of them want information about solar, wind and other renewable energy options. While these technologies work well for homeowners in some applications, often there are more cost-effective ways to save energy and lower household heating bills that should be considered first.

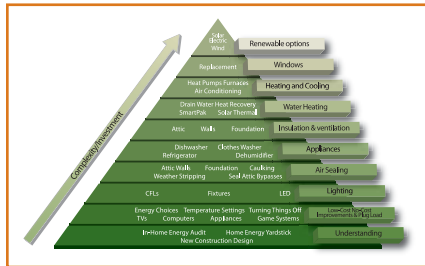
One tool to help customers prioritize energy improvements and develop an action plan is the Pyramid of Conservation. This resource is available on our **powerofONE** Web site ([www.mnpower.com/powerofone](http://www.mnpower.com/powerofone)). Use the pyramid to assist your home construction or remodeling clients in achieving their conservation goals, while generating new business for your company.

Meanwhile, the 2009 Energy Design Conference & Expo will be held March 9-11 at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center. Register by February 25 for an early bird discount. Also, watch for information this spring about Minnesota Power's new Home Performance assessment program, which includes building diagnostics. We refer to it as the "existing home" version of the Triple E New Construction program. We're hoping it will provide additional opportunities to build your business on energy efficiency.

Dean Talbott  
Residential Program Manager

## PYRAMID OF CONSERVATION:

### Step Up to Energy Efficiency



Look for the Pyramid of Conservation on the **powerofONE** Web site ([www.mnpower.com/powerofone](http://www.mnpower.com/powerofone)). Click on the pyramid and print a copy to share with your customers.

Builders, remodelers, and other trade professionals who provide honest, unbiased answers are in high demand in today's economy. Minnesota Power now has a tool to help contractors and residential customers prioritize steps and develop personalized action plans for cost-effective home energy improvements.

It is called the Pyramid of Conservation, and it arranges common energy-efficiency measures by initial cost and complexity. Those near the bottom, such as controlling thermostats and replacing light bulbs, cost very little and are easy to implement. As you move up the pyramid, items get more expensive and complex. Home-generated solar energy and wind power are way at the top.

"Technologies at the top are fun, exciting and cutting edge, but there are a lot of less expensive, more effective ways to improve home energy performance that should *cont.*



## TRIPLE E TREND: Home Performance Assessment

Minnesota Power has been offering free basic home energy audits to residential customers for nearly 30 years. Now, demand is growing for a more comprehensive home assessment program that includes building diagnostics, such as blower door testing and infrared thermography scans. This spring, Minnesota Power plans to introduce a new fee-based program, called Home Performance, which will provide these services. It will include training to certify contractors for this work. Watch for more information in the next issue of *Building Up*. It is like Triple E for existing homes.



# REGISTER NOW

Early bird discount through February 25, 2009

## 19TH ANNUAL ENERGY DESIGN CONFERENCE & EXPO

March 10-11, 2009 (pre-conference March 9)  
Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center

Learn from experts and professionals about the latest innovations in high performance buildings, sustainable design and development, and current energy and environmental topics. This ever-growing event offers more than 55 informative workshops and 90 exhibitors, plus the opportunity to network with the best in the business.

### Topics include:

- *Designing and Building a High Performance Home*
- *Houses That Work, 1 & 2 (EEBA)*
- *LEED for Homes and MN GreenStar*
- *Advanced Retrofitting for Energy Efficiency*
- *HVAC and Combustion Safety*
- *The Human Health and Housing Connection*
- *Renewable Energy Technology*
- *Affordable Housing—Incorporating Green & Energy Efficiency*

### REGISTER ONLINE [WWW.DULUTHENERGYDESIGN.COM](http://WWW.DULUTHENERGYDESIGN.COM)

PLANNING TEAM: Minnesota Power; Superior Water, Light & Power; ComfortSystems; Great River Energy; Arrowhead Builders Association; CSI Twin Ports Chapter; AIA Northland Chapter; MN Green Communities; MPCA; Cooperative Light and Power; U.S. Green Building Council (Minnesota Chapter); and Wagner Zaun Architecture

SPONSORS: Minnesota GreenStar, Home Energy Magazine, Greater Minnesota Housing Fund, Energy and Environmental Building Association (EEBA), Minnesota Energy Resources, and Superior Water, Light & Power



Check out past issues of *Building Up* online at [www.mnpower.com/energyinfo](http://www.mnpower.com/energyinfo)


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*cont. from front* come first,” said Terry Webster, who works in public outreach for the Office of Energy Security in the Minnesota Department of Commerce. “We always tell people to begin with an in-home energy audit to learn more about how they and their homes use energy.”

The Pyramid of Conservation is built on a foundation of understanding how energy is used in the home and what steps are needed to achieve energy-saving goals. While each home is different and not all improvements make sense in every situation, it is a useful guide for those questioning where to apply their time, energy and money for the greatest, long-term energy-efficiency impact. Conservation becomes more of a personal decision.

Start at the bottom. Encourage your customers to get a home performance assessment and use energy calculators ([www.mnpower.com/calculators](http://www.mnpower.com/calculators)) like the ENERGY STAR® Home Energy Yard Stick and Fuel Cost Comparison. These tools will assist them in making informed decisions about energy conservation and position you to help them succeed. 

## Featured Incentives

**EDUCATE YOUR CUSTOMERS** about Minnesota Power’s conservation incentives and build your business on energy efficiency.

**Great Refrigerator/Freezer Roundup 2009 \$50 Reward:** We’ll pick up and recycle that old energy hog (refrigerator or freezer) from an eligible customer’s basement, garage or recreation room and reward them with \$50 for the first unit, plus \$35 for a second qualifying unit rounded up. Must be a Minnesota Power customer; unit must be 10-27 cu. ft. and in working condition.

**Drain Water Heat Recovery (DWHR)** \$400 rebate for Minnesota Power customers who heat their water with electricity for installation of DWHR systems by trained installers. DWHR systems take the heat from shower water to preheat cold water coming into the water heater. Depending on the number of showers taken, DWHR units can save up to 40% on water heating costs.

**Air Source Heat Pump** \$300 rebate for furnace-integrated systems (ductwork) and \$500 rebate for mini-split ductless systems. To qualify, electricity must be a primary heat source. A program-trained contractor must install the equipment.

**Triple E New Construction:** Up to \$2,000 in rebates, based on specific Triple E standards for thermal integrity, airtight construction, moisture control, ventilation, heating and cooling, water heating, and inclusion of ENERGY STAR®-qualified lighting and appliances.

Visit [www.mnpower.com/foundmoney](http://www.mnpower.com/foundmoney) for details on these offers and other rebate specials.



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*...it begins with you.*