

# one

# community

May 2010

## COMMUNITIES DEMONSTRATING THE POWER OF ONE®

# Learn & Earn

to save energy  
money for schools



If middle school students in Pequot Lakes, Minn., and fifth graders in Cloquet, Minn., were cartoons, they might be walking around with light bulbs over their heads—energy-efficient compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs!

These students, like many others across Minnesota Power's service territory, have experienced "ah hah" moments through Learn & Earn. The popular energy education and school-based fundraising program teaches youth the benefits of home energy efficiency while earning money for their schools.

Learn & Earn engages youth in hands-on classroom activities related to energy efficiency. It encourages them to share their knowledge within their schools, families and communities and promotes the sale of energy-efficient lights and appliances through participating area retailers.

Minnesota Power provides rebates and makes a donation to the schools for each qualifying product sold during the campaign, up to a total of \$5,000. Schools also can earn money by encouraging people to recycle old energy-hog refrigerators and freezers.

Each year, Minnesota Power selects up to five school communities to participate in Learn & Earn through a competitive application process. Cloquet and Pequot Lakes were chosen for the 2009-2010 school year, based on their enthusiastic, creative approaches.

### Cloquet Fifth Graders

Fifth graders at Washington Elementary and Churchill Elementary Schools took their roles as energy-educators very seriously. After learning about CFL bulbs, light emitting diode (LED) holiday lights, and ENERGY STAR® appliances in their own classrooms, they developed SMART Board presentations to share with younger students in their schools.

"They wrote their own scripts and practiced what they were going to say," said Celeste Kawulok, fifth grade teacher, Churchill Elementary. "The experience made them much more aware of how behaviors in the home can affect the environment."

Some of the students traveled from classroom to classroom with light boards and meters, demonstrating how CFL bulbs use 75% less energy than their incandescent counterparts. They displayed posters in the middle school, high school and larger community to promote the Learn & Earn fundraiser and brought home information and rebate coupons to encourage their parents to participate.



Top and bottom: Fifth graders at Washington Elementary School in Cloquet learned the energy-saving advantages of CFL bulbs using equipment provided by Minnesota Power. Middle: Washington Elementary students raised \$1,725 for environmental education through Learn & Earn.



a conservation program



Top to bottom: Students at Churchill Elementary with their recognition plaque and check for \$1,725 from Minnesota Power; Amanda Oja of Minnesota Power (center) with Churchill Principal David Wangen and Fifth Grade Teacher Celeste Kawulok; Pequot Lakes eighth graders raised \$1,900 for environmental field trips; a light board used in Learn & Earn classroom experiments.



Products were sold at several local retailers, including L & M Supply, Appliance Connection, Daugherty's Appliance, Johnson Mertz, Prime Appliance, Sears and Ferguson Bath and Kitchen.

Nearly 600 energy-efficient products were sold through this event, with the potential for area households to save more than 74,000 kWh and avoid an estimated \$30,000 in energy costs over five years. The annual environmental impact translates to reducing carbon emissions by approximately 81 tons—the equivalent of taking 16 cars off the road, reducing miles driven by 189,667, or powering six homes for a year.

Each school raised \$1,725 for environmental education activities and supplies.

### Pequot Lakes Middle School

Eighth graders at Pequot Lakes Middle School hosted a booth during school conferences to demonstrate the benefits of CFLs and LEDs, educate parents about energy efficiency, and pass out rebate coupons. They created PowerPoint presentations about environmental issues, which they shared with younger students, and tied energy efficiency into their regular science curriculum.

Andrea Shogren, the teacher leading this effort, met with area retailers to explain the program and encourage stores to promote it.

"It was a great community partnership," said Bob Peterson, store manager, Thurlow Hardware, Pequot Lakes. "For us, it drew in new customers who were aware of the program and wanted to try CFLs and LED holiday lights. A lot of them came back and bought more."

Other participating retailers were Hardware Hank, Bob and Fran's Factory Direct, Schroeder's Appliance Center and Sears. In Pequot Lakes, Crow Wing Power joined Minnesota Power in sponsoring the event.

Through this program, Central Minnesota households will save an estimated 95,000 kWh per year and avoid more than \$35,000 in energy costs over five years. The potential environmental impact is the reduction of about 104 tons of carbon emissions per year, which equates to taking 21 cars off the road, reducing miles driven by 242,749, or powering eight homes for a year.

Students raised \$1,900 for environmental education field trips.

"Learn & Earn is a win-win for our students, school, families, community members and local retailers," Shogren said. "Kids get excited to see the things they are doing can have a real impact in their community and the larger environment."

*To read about other schools' Learn & Earn experiences, visit us at*  
**[www.mnpower.com/powerofonecommunity](http://www.mnpower.com/powerofonecommunity)**



**Contact us**  
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